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Not to be taken away

UofM

Sir Walter Scott

From the painting by C. R. Leslie, R.A., in the collection of Alaric A. Watts, Esq.

THE WORKS OF
DONALD G. MITCHELL

ENGLISH LANDS LETTERS AND KINGS

THE LATER GEORGES TO VICTORIA

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
NEW YORK ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦ 1907

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FORECAST

THE printers asked if there is to be prefatory matter.

There shall be no excuses, nor any defensive explanations: and I shall only give here such forecast of this little book as may serve as a reminder, and appetizer, for the kindly acquaintances I meet once more; and further serve as an illustrative *menu,* for the benefit of those newer and more critical friends who browse tentatively at the tables of the booksellers.

This volume—the fourth in its series of English Lands and Letters—opens upon that always delightful country of hills and waters, which is known as the Lake District of England;—where we found Wordsworth, stalking over the fells—and where we now find the maker of those heavy poems of *Thalaba* and *Madoc,* and of the charming little biography of Nelson. There, too, we find that strange creature, De Quincey, full of a tumult of thoughts and language—out of which comes ever and anon some penetrating utterance, whose barb

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of words fixes it in the mind, and makes it rankle. Professor Wilson is his fellow, among the hills by Elleray—as strenuous, and weightier with his great bulk of Scottish manhood; the *Isle of Palms* is forgotten; but not "Christopher in his Shooting Jacket"—stained and bespattered with Highland libations.

A Londoner we encounter—Crabb Robinson, full of gossip and conventionalities; and also that cautious, yet sometimes impassioned Scottish bard who sang of *Hohenlinden,* and of *Gertrude of Wyoming.* Next, we have asked readers to share our regalement, in wandering along the Tweed banks, and in rekindling the memories of the verse, the home, and the chivalric stories of the benign master of Abbotsford, for whom—whatever newer literary fashions may now claim allegiance and whatever historic *quid-nuncs* may say in derogation —I think there are great multitudes who will keep a warm place in their hearts and easily pardon a kindred warmth in our words.

After Dryburgh, and its pall, we have in these pages found our way to Edinboro', and have sketched the beginners, and the beginnings of that great northern quarterly, which so long dominated the realm of British bookcraft, and which rallied to its ranks such men

as Jeffrey and the witty Sydney Smith, and Mackintosh and the pervasive and petulant Brougham—full of power and pyrotechnics. These great names and their quarterly organ call up comparison with that other, southern and distinctive Quarterly of Albemarle Street, which was dressed for literary battle by writers like Gifford, Croker, Southey, and Lockhart.

The Prince Regent puts in an appearance in startling waistcoats and finery—vibrating between Windsor and London; so does the bluff Sailor-King William IV. Next, Walter Savage Landor leads the drifting paragraphs of our story—a great, strong man; master of classicism, and master of language; now tender, and now virulent; never quite master of himself.

Of Leigh Hunt, and of his graceful, lightweighted, gossipy literary utterance, there is indulgent mention, with some delightful passages of verse foregathered from his many books. Of Thomas Moore, too, there is respectful and grateful—if not over-exultant—talk; yet in these swift days there be few who are tempted to tarry long in the "rosy bowers by Bendemeer."

From Moore and the brilliant fopperies of "The First Gentleman of Europe," we slip to

the disorderly, but pungent and vivid essays of Hazlitt—to the orderly and stately historic labors of Hallam, closing up our chapter with the gay company who used to frequent the brilliant salon of the Lady Blessington—first in Seamore Place, and later at Gore House. There we find Bulwer, Disraeli (in his flamboyant youth-time), the elegant Count d'Orsay, and others of that train-band.

Following quickly upon these, we have asked our readers to fare with us along the old and vivid memories of Newstead Abbey—to track the master-poet of his time, through his early days of romance and marriage—through his journeyings athwart Europe, from the orange groves of Lisbon to the olives of Thessaly—from his friendship with Shelley, and life at Meillerie with its loud joys and stains—through his wild revels of Venice—his masterly verse-making—his quietudes of Ravenna (where the Guiccioli shone)—through his passionate zeal for Greece, and his last days at Missolonghi, with one brief glimpse of his final resting-place, beside his passionate Gordon mother, under the grim, old tower of Hucknall-Torkard. So long indeed do we dwell upon this Byronic episode, as to make of it the virtual *pièce de résistance* in the literary *menu* of these pages.

FORECAST

After the brusque and noisy King William there trails royally into view that Sovereign Victoria, over whose blanched head—in these very June days in which I write—the bells are all ringing a joyous Jubilee for her sixtieth year of reign. But to our eye, and to these pages, she comes as a girl in her teens—modest, yet resolute and calm; and among her advisers we see the suave and courtly Melbourne; and among those who make parliamentary battle, in the Queen's young years that famed historian who has pictured the lives of her kinsfolk—William and Mary—in a way which will make them familiar in the ages to come.

We have a glimpse, too, of the jolly Captain Marryat cracking his for'castle jokes, and of the somewhat tedious, though kindly, G. P. R. James lifting his chivalric notes about men-at-arms and knightly adventures—a belated hunter in the fields of ancient feudal gramarye.

And with this pennant of the old times of tourney flung to the sharp winds of these days, and shivering in the rude blasts—where anarchic threats lurk and murmur—we close our preface, and bid our readers all welcome to the spread of—what our old friend Dugald Dalgetty would call—the *Vivers*.

D. G. M.

EDGEWOOD, June 24, 1897.

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THE LATER GEORGES
TO VICTORIA

THE LATER GEORGES TO VICTORIA

CHAPTER I

THE reader will, perhaps, remember that we brought our last year's ramble amongst British Lands and Letters to an end—in the charming Lake District of England. There, we found Coleridge, before he was yet besotted by his opium-hunger; there, too, we had Church-interview with the stately, silver-haired poet of Rydal Mount—making ready for his last Excursion into the deepest of Nature's mysteries.

The reader will recall, further, how this poet and seer signalized some of the later years of his life by indignant protests against the schemes—which were then afoot—for pushing railways among the rural serenities of Westmoreland.

THE LAKE COUNTRY

IT is no wonder; for those Lake counties are very beautiful,—as if, some day, all the tamer features of English landscape had been sifted

out, and the residue of picturesqueness and salient objects of flood and mountain had been bunched together in those twin regions of the Derwent and of Windermere. Every American traveller is familiar, of course, with the charming glimpses of Lake Saltonstall from the Shore-line high-road between New York and Boston; let them imagine these multiplied by a score, at frequently recurring intervals of walk or drive; not bald duplications; for sometimes the waters have longer stretch, and the hills have higher reach, and fields have richer culture and more abounding verdure; moreover, occasional gray church towers lift above the trees, and specks of villages whiten spots in the valleys; and the smoothest and hardest of roads run along the margin of the lakes; and masses of ivy cover walls, and go rioting all over the fronts of wayside inns. Then, mountains as high as Graylock, in Berkshire, pile suddenly out of the quieter undulations of surface, with high-lying ponds in their gulches; there are deep swales of heather, and bald rocks, and gray stone cairns that mark the site of ancient Cumbrian battles.

No wonder that a man loving nature and loving solitude, as Wordsworth did love them, should have demurred to the project of railways,

and have shuddered—as does Ruskin now—at the whistling of the demon of civilization among those hills. But it has come there, notwithstanding, and come to stay; and from the station beyond Bowness, upon the charmingest bit of Windermere, there lies now only an early morning's walk to the old home of Wordsworth at Rydal. Immediately thereabout, it is true, the levels are a little more puzzling to the engineers, so that the thirteen miles of charming country road which stretch thence —twirling hither and yon, and up and down— in a northwesterly direction to the town of Keswick and the Derwent valley, remain now in very much the same condition as when I walked over them, in leisurely way, fifty odd years ago this coming spring. The road in passing out from Rydal village goes near the cottage where poor Hartley Coleridge lived, and earlier, that strange creature De Quincey (of whom we shall have presently more to say); it skirts the very margin of Grasmere Lake; this latter being at your left, while upon the right you can almost see among the near hills the famous "Wishing Gate;" farther on is Grasmere village, and Grasmere church-yard —in a corner of which is the grave of the old poet, and a modest stone at its head on which

is graven only the name, William Wordsworth,—as if anything more were needed! A mile or two beyond, one passes the "Swan Inn," and would like to lodge there, and maybe clamber up Helvellyn, which here shows its great hulk on the right—no miniature mountain, but one which would hold its own (3,000 feet) among the lesser ones which shoulder up the horizon at "Crawford's," in the White Mountains.

Twirling and winding along the flank of Helvellyn, the road comes presently upon the long Dunmail Rise, where a Cumbrian battle was fought, and where, some six hundred feet above the level of Rydal water, one plunges into mountain savagery. All the while Helvellyn is rising like a giant on the right, and on the left is the lake of Thirlmere, with its shores of precipice. An hour more of easy walking brings one to another crest of hill from which the slope is northward and westward, and from this point you catch sight of the great mass of Skiddaw; while a little hitherward is the white speckle of Keswick town; and stretching away from it to your left lies all the valley of Derwent Water—with a cleft in the hills at its head, down which the brooklet of Lodore comes—"splashing and flashing."

ROBERT SOUTHEY

I HAVE taken the reader upon this stroll through a bit of the Lake country of England that we might find the poet Dr. Southey[1] in his old home at Keswick. It is not properly in the town, but just across the Greta River, which runs southward of the town. There, the modest but good-sized house has been standing for these many years upon a grassy knoll, in its little patch of quiet lawn, with scattered show of trees—but never so many as to forbid full view up the long stretch of Derwent Water. His own hexameters shall tell us something of this view:

"I stood at the window beholding
Mountain and lake and vale; the valley disrobed
of its verdure;
Derwent, retaining yet from eve a glassy
reflection
Where his expanded breast, then still and smooth
as a mirror,

[1]Robert Southey, b. 1774; d. 1843. *Joan of Arc* (pub.) 1796; *Thalaba,* 1801; *A Vision of Judgment,* 1821; *Life of Nelson,* 1813; *The Doctor,* 1834–47. *Life and Correspondence,* edited by Rev. Chas, Cuthbert Southey, 1849–50.

Under the woods reposed; the hills that calm and majestic
Lifted their heads into the silent sky, from far Glaramara,
Bleacrag, and Maidenmawr to Grisedal and westernmost Wython,
Dark and distinct they rose. The clouds had gathered above them
High in the middle air, huge purple pillowy masses,
While in the West beyond was the last pale tint of the twilight,
Green as the stream in the glen, whose pure and chrysolite waters
Flow o'er a schistous bed."

This may be very true picturing; but it has not the abounding flow of an absorbing rural enthusiasm; there is too sharp a search in it for the assonance, the spondees and the alliteration—to say nothing of the mineralogy. Indeed, though Southey loved those country ways and heights, of which I have given you a glimpse, and loved his daily walks round about Keswick and the Derwent, and loved the bracing air of the mountains—I think he loved these things as the feeders and comforters of his physical rather than of his spiritual nature. We rarely happen, in his verse, upon such tran-

scripts of out-of-door scenes as are inthralling, and captivate our finer senses; nor does he make the boughs and blossoms tell such stories as filtered through the wood-craft of Chaucer.

Notwithstanding this, it is to that home of Southey, in the beautiful Lake country, that we must go for our most satisfying knowledge of the man. He was so wedded to it; he so loved the murmur of the Greta; so loved his walks; so loved the country freedom; so loved his workaday clothes and cap and his old shoes;[1] so loved his books—double-deep in his library, and running over into hall and parlor and corridors; loved, too, the children's voices that were around him there—not his own only, but those always next, and almost his own—those of the young Coleridges. These were stranded there, with their mother (sister of Mrs. Southey), owing to the rueful neglect of their father—the bard and metaphysician. I do not think this neglect was due wholly to indifference. Coleridge sidled away from his wife and left her at Keswick in that old home of his own,—where he knew care was

[1] In a letter to his friend Bedford (he being then aged fifty) he writes: "I have taken again to my old coat and old shoes; dine at the reasonable hour of four; enjoy, as I used to do, the wholesome indulgence of a nap after dinner," etc.

good—afraid to encounter her clear, honest, discerning—though unsympathetic—eyes, while he was putting all resources and all subterfuges to the feeding of that opiate craze which had fastened its wolfish fangs upon his very soul.

And Southey had most tender and beautiful care for those half-discarded children of the "Ancient Mariner." He writes in this playful vein to young Hartley (then aged eleven), who is away on a short visit:

"Mr. Jackson has bought a cow, but he has had no calf since you left him. Edith [his own daughter] grows like a young giantess, and has a disposition to bite her arm, which you know is a very foolish trick. Your [puppy] friend Dapper, who is, I believe, your God-dog, is in good health, though he grows every summer graver than the last. I am desired to send you as much love as can be enclosed in a letter. I hope it will not be charged double on that account at the post-office. But there is Mrs. Wilson's love, Mr. Jackson's, your Aunt Southey's, your Aunt Lovell's and Edith's; with a *purr* from Bona Marietta [the cat], an open-mouthed kiss from Herbert [the baby], and three wags of the tail from Dapper. I trust they will all arrive safe. Yr. dutiful uncle."

And the same playful humor, and disposi-

tion to evoke open-eyed wonderment, runs up and down the lines of that old story of Bishop Hatto and the rats; and that other smart slap at the barbarities of war—which young people know, or ought to know, as the "Battle of Blenheim,"—wherein old Kaspar says,—

"it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sur
But things like that, you know, must be,
After a famous Victory.

Great praise the Duke of Marlboro' won
And our good Prince Eugene;
'Why, 't was a very wicked thing!'
Said little Wilhelmine
'Nay—nay—my little girl,' quoth he,
'It was a famous Victory.'"

Almost everybody has encountered these Southeyan verses, and that other, about Mary the "Maid of the Inn," in some one or other of the many "collections" of drifting poetry. There are very few, too, who have not, some day, read that most engaging little biography of Admiral Nelson, which tells, in most straightforward and simple and natural way,

the romantic story of a life full of heroism, and scored with stains. I do not know, but—with most people—a surer and more lasting memory of Southey would be cherished by reason of those unpretending writings already named, and by knowledge of his quiet, orderly, idyllic home-life among the Lakes of Cumberland—tenderly and wisely provident of the mixed household committed to his care—than the more ambitious things he did, or by the louder life he lived in the controversialism and politics of the day.

HIS EARLY LIFE

To judge him more nearly we must give a slight trace of his history. Born down in Bristol (in whose neighborhood we found, you will remember, Chatterton, Mistress More, Coleridge, and others)—he was the son of a broken down linen-draper, who could help him little; but a great-aunt—a starched woman of the Betsey Trotwood stamp—could and did befriend him, until it came to her knowledge, on a sudden, that he was plotting emigration to the Susquehanna, and plotting marriage with a dowerless girl of Bristol; then she dropped

him, and the guardian aunt appears nevermore.

An uncle, however, who is a chaplain in the British service, helps him to Oxford—would have had him take orders—in which case we should have had, of a certainty, some day, Bishop Southey; and probably a very good one. But he has some scruples about the Creed, being overweighted, perhaps, by intercourse with young Coleridge on the side of Unitarianism: "Every atom of grass," he says, "is worth all the Fathers."[1] He, however, accompanies the uncle to Portugal; dreams dreams and has poetic visions there in the orange-groves of Cintra; projects, too, a History of Portugal—which project unfortunately never comes to fulfilment. He falls in with the United States Minister, General Humphreys, who brings to his notice Dwight's "Conquest of Canaan," which Southey is good enough to think "has some merit."

Thereafter he comes back to his young wife; is much in London and thereabout; coming to know Charles Lamb, Rogers, and Moore, with other such. He is described at that day as tall—a most presentable man—with dark hair and eyes, wonderful arched brows; "head of a

[1] Letter to Bedford, under the date of December, 1793.—*Life and Correspondence*, p. 69.

poet," Byron said; looking up and off, with proud foretaste of the victories he will win; he has, too, very early, made bold literary thrust at that old story of Joan of Arc: a good topic, of large human interest, but not over successfully dealt with by him. After this came that extraordinary poem of *Thalaba,* the first of a triad of poems which excited great literary wonderment (the others being the *Curse of Kehama* and *Madoc*). They are rarely heard of now and scarcely known. Beyond that fragment from *Kehama,* beginning

"They sin who tell us Love can die,"

hardly a page from either has drifted from the high sea of letters into those sheltered bays where the makers of anthologies ply their trade. Yet no weak man could have written either one of these almost forgotten poems of Southey; recondite learning makes its pulse felt in them; bright fancies blaze almost blindingly here and there; old myths of Arabia and Welsh fables are galvanized and brought to life, and set off with special knowledge and cumbrous aids of stilted and redundant prosody; but all is utterly remote from human sympathies, and all as cold—however it may attract by its glitter—as the dead hand

"Shrivelled, and dry, and black,"

which holds the magic taper in the Dom Daniel cavern of *Thalaba.*

A fourth long poem—written much later in life—*Roderick the Goth,* has a more substantial basis of human story, and so makes larger appeal to popular interest; but it had never a marked success.

Meantime, Southey has not kept closely by London; there have been peregrinations, and huntings for a home—for children and books must have a settlement. Through friends of influence he had come to a fairly good political appointment in Ireland, but has no love for the bulls and blunderbusses which adorn life there; nor will he tutor his patron's boys—which also comes into the scale of his duties—so gives up that chance of a livelihood. There is, too, a new trip to Portugal with his wife; and a new reverent and dreamy listening to the rustle of the shining leaves of the orange-trees of Cintra. I do not think those murmurous tales of the trees of Portugal, burdened with old monastic flavors, ever went out of his ears wholly till he died. But finally the poet does come to settlement, somewhere about 1803—in that Keswick home, where we found him at the opening of our chapter.

GRETA HALL

COLERIDGE is for a while a fellow-tenant with him there, then blunders away to Grasmere—to London, to Highgate, and into that overstrained, disorderly life of which we know so much and yet not enough. But Southey does not lack self-possession, or lack poise: he has not indeed so much brain to keep on balance; but he thinks excellently well of his own parts; he is disgusted when people look up to him after his Irish appointment—"as if," he said, "the author of *Joan of Arc,* and *Thalaba,* were made a great man by scribing for the Chancellor of the Exchequer."

Yet for that poem of *Thalaba,* in a twelvemonth after issue, he had only received as his share of profits a matter of £3 15s. Indeed, Southey would have fared hardly money-wise in those times, if he had not won the favor of a great many good and highly placed friends; and it was only four years after his establishment at Keswick, when these friends succeeded in securing to him an annual Government pension of £200. Landor had possibly aided him before this time; he certainly had admired greatly his poems and given praise that would

have been worth more, if he had not spoiled it by rating Southey as a poet so much above Byron, Scott, and Coleridge.[1]

In addition to these aids the *Quarterly Review* was set afoot in those days in London—of which sturdy defender of Church and State, Southey soon became a virtual pensioner. Moreover, with his tastes, small moneys went a long way; he was methodical to the last degree; he loved his old coats and habits; he loved his marches and countermarches among the hills that flank Skiddaw better than he loved horses, or dogs, or guns; a quiet evening in his library with his books, was always more relished than ever so good a place at Drury Lane. New friends and old brighten that retirement for him. He has his vacation runs to

[1]In the *Imaginary Conversation* between Southey and Porson, Landor makes Porson say: "It is pleasant to find two poets [Southey and Wordsworth] living as brothers, and particularly when the palm lies between them, with hardly a third in sight."

Lamb, too, in a letter to Mr. Coleridge (p. 194, Moxon edition of 1832, London), says: "On the whole, I expect Southey one day to rival Milton; I already deem him equal to Cowper, and superior to all living poets besides." This is *apropos* of *Joan of Arc*, which had then recently appeared. He begins his letter: "With *Joan of Arc* I have been delighted, amazed; I had not presumed to expect anything of such excellence from Southey."

Edinboro'—to London—to Bristol; the children are growing (though there is death of one little one—away from home); the books are piling up in his halls in bigger and always broader ranks. He writes of Brazil, of Spanish matters, of new poetry, of Nelson, of Society—showing touches of his early radicalism, and of a Utopian humor, which age and the heavy harness of conventionalism he has learned to wear, do not wholly destroy. He writes of Wesley and of the Church—settled in those maturer years into a comfortable routine-ordered Churchism, which does not let too airy a conscience prick him into unrest. A good, safe monarchist, too, who comes presently, and rightly enough—through a suggestion of George IV., then Regent in place of crazy George III,[1]—by his position as Poet Laureate; and in that capacity writes a few dismally stiff odes, which are his worst work.

[1]George IV. was appointed Regent in the year 1811, the old king, George III., being then plainly so far bereft of his senses as to incapacitate him even for intelligent clerical service. He died, as we shall find later, in the year 1820, when the Regent succeeded, and reigned for ten years.

The *Croker Papers* (1884), recently published, make mention of Mr. Croker's intervention in the matter of the bestowal of the Laureateship upon Southey. Croker was an old friend of Southey, and a trusted go-between in all literary service for the royal household.

Even Wordsworth, who walks over those Cumberland hills with reverence, and with a pious fondness traces the "star-shaped shadows on the naked stones"—cannot warm to Southey's new gush over royalty in his New Year's Odes. Coleridge chafes; and Landor, we may be sure, sniffs, and swears, with a great roar of voice, at what looks so like to sycophancy.

To this time belongs that ode whose vengeful lines, after the fall of Napoleon, whip round the Emperor's misdeeds in a fury of Tory Anglicanism, and call on France to avenge her wrongs:—

"By the lives which he hath shed,
By the ruin he hath spread,
By the prayers which rise for curses on his head—
Redeem, O France, thine ancient fame!
Revenge thy sufferings and thy shame!
Open thine eyes! Too long hast thou been blind!
Take vengeance for thyself and for mankind!"

This seems to me only the outcry of a tempestuous British scold; and yet a late eulogist has the effrontery to name it in connection with the great prayerful burst of Milton upon the massacre of the Waldenses:—

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold."

No, no; Southey was no Milton—does not reach to the height of an echo of Milton.

Yet he was a rare and accomplished man of books—of books rather than genius, I think. An excellent type of the very clever and well-trained professional writer, working honestly and steadily in the service to which he has put himself. Very politic, too, in his personal relations. Even Carlyle—for a wonder—speaks of him without lacerating him.

In a certain sense he was not insincere; yet he had none of that outspoken exuberant sincerity which breaks forth in declaratory speech, before the public time-pieces have told us how to pitch our voices. Landor had this: so had Coleridge. Southey never would have run away from his wife—never; he might dislike her; but Society's great harness (if nothing more) would hold him in check; there were conditions under which Coleridge might and did. Southey would never over-drink or over-tipple; there were conditions (not rare) under which Coleridge might and did. Yet, for all this, I can imagine a something finer in the poet of the *Ancient Mariner*—that felt moral chafings far more cruelly; and for real poetic unction you might put *Thalaba,* and *Kehama,* and *Madoc* all in one scale, and only *Christabel*

in the other—and the Southey poems would be bounced out of sight. But how many poets of the century can put a touch to verse like the touch in *Christabel?*

THE DOCTOR AND LAST SHADOWS

I CANNOT forbear allusion to that curious book —little read now—which was published by Southey anonymously, called *The Doctor*:[1] a book showing vast accumulation of out-of-the-way bits of learning—full of quips, and conceits, and oddities; there are traces of Sterne in it and of Rabelais; but there is little trenchant humor of its own. It is a literary jungle; and all its wit sparkles like marsh fire-flies that lead no whither. You may wonder at its erudition; wonder at its spurts of meditative wisdom; wonder at its touches of scholastic cleverness, and its want of any effective coherence, but you wonder more at its waste of power. Yet he had great pride in this book; believed it would be read admiringly long after him; enjoyed vastly a boyish dalliance—if not a lying by-play—with the secret of its authorship; but he was, I think, greatly aggrieved by its want of the brilliant success he had hoped for.

But sorrows of a more grievous sort were

[1] The sixth and seventh volumes appeared after the poet's death, in 1847.

dawning on him. On the very year before the publication of the first volumes of *The Doctor,* he writes to his old friend, Bedford: "I have been parted from my wife by something worse than death. Forty years she has been the life of my life; and I have left her this day in a lunatic asylum."

But she comes back within a year—quiet, but all beclouded; looking vacantly upon the faces of the household, saddened, and much thinned now. For the oldest boy Herbert is dead years since; and the daughter, Isabel, "the most radiant creature (he says) that I ever beheld, or shall behold"—dead too; his favorite niece, Sara Coleridge, married and gone; his daughter Edith, married and gone; and now that other Edith—his wife—looking with an idle stare around the almost empty house. It was at this juncture, when all but courage seemed taken from him, that Sir Robert Peel wrote, offering the poet a Baronetcy; but he was beyond taking heart from any such toy as this. He must have felt a grim complacency—now that his hair was white and his shoulders bowed by weight of years and toil, and his home so nearly desolate—in refusing the empty bauble which Royalty offered, and in staying —plain Robert Southey.

Presently thereafter his wife died; and he, whose life had been such a domestic one, strayed round the house purposeless, like a wheel spinning blindly—off from its axle. Friends, however, took him away with them to Paris; among these friends—that always buoyant and companionable Crabb Robinson, whose diary is so rich in reminiscences of the literary men of these times. Southey's son Cuthbert went with him, and the poet made a good mock of enjoying the new scenes; plotted great work again—did labor heartily on his return, and two years thereafter committed the indiscretion of marrying again: the loneliness at Keswick was so great. The new mistress he had long known and esteemed; and she (Miss Caroline Bowles) was an excellent, kindly, judicious woman—although a poetess.

But it was never a festive house again. All the high lights in that home picture which was set between Skiddaw and the Derwentwater were blurred. Wordsworth, striding across the hills by Dunmail Rise, on one of his rare visits, reports that Southey is all distraught; can talk of nothing but his books; and presently—counting only by months—it appears that he will not even talk of these—

will talk of nothing. His hand-writing, which had been neat—of which he had been proud—went all awry in a great scrawl obliquely athwart the page. For a year or two he is in this lost trail; mumbling, but not talking; seeing things—yet as one who sees not; clinging to those loved books of his—fondling them; passing up and down the library to find this or the other volume that had been carefully cherished—taking them from their shelves; putting his lips to them—then replacing them; —a year or more of this automatic life—the light in him all quenched.

He died in 1843, and was buried in the pretty church-yard of Crosthwaite, a short mile away from his old home. Within the church is a beautiful recumbent figure of the poet, which every traveller should see.

CRABB ROBINSON

I HAD occasion to name Crabb Robinson[1] as one of the party accompanying Southey on his last visit to the Continent. Robinson was a man whom it is well to know something of, by reason of his Boswell-ian *Reminiscences,*

[1] Henry Crabb Robinson, b. 1775; d. 1867. *Diary, Reminiscences,* etc. (ed. by Sadler), 1869.

and because—though of comparatively humble origin—he grew to be an excellent type of the well-bred, well-read club-man of his day—knowing everybody who was worth knowing, from Mrs. Siddons to Walter Scott, and talking about everybody who was worth talking of, from Louis Philippe to Mrs. Barbauld.

He was quick, of keen perception—always making the most of his opportunities; had fair schooling; gets launched somehow upon an attorney's career, to which he never took with great enthusiasm. He was an apt French scholar—passed four or five years, too, studying in Germany; his assurance and intelligence, aptitude, and good-nature bringing him to know almost everybody of consequence. He is familiar with Madame de Staël—hobnobs with many of the great German writers of the early part of this century—is for a time correspondent of the *Times* from the Baltic and Stockholm; and from Spain also, in the days when Bonaparte is raging over the Continent. He returns to London, revives old acquaintances, and makes new ones; knows Landor and Dyer and Campbell; is hail fellow—as would seem—with Wordsworth, Southey, Moore, and Lady Blessington; falls into some helpful legacies; keeps lazily by his legal prac-

tice; husbands his resources, but never marries; pounces upon every new lion of the day; hears Coleridge lecture; hears Hazlitt lecture; hears Erskine plead, and goes to play whist and drink punch with the Lambs. He was full of anecdote, and could talk by the hour. Rogers once said to his guests who were prompt at breakfast: "If you 've anything to say, you 'd better say it; Crabb Robinson is coming." He talked on all subjects with average acuteness, and more than average command of language, and little graceful subtleties of social speech—but with no special or penetrative analysis of his subject-matter. The very type of a current, popular, well-received man of the town—good at cards—good at a club dinner—good at supper—good in travel—good for a picnic—good for a lady's tea-fight.

He must have written reams on reams of letters. The big books of his *Diary and Reminiscences*[1] which I commend to you for their amusing and most entertaining gossip, contained only a most inconsiderable part of his written leavings.

He took admirable care of himself; did not permit exposure to draughts—to indigestions, or to bad company of any sort. Withal he was

[1]Best edition is that of Macmillan, London, 1869.

charitable—was particular and fastidious; always knew the best rulings of society about ceremony, and always obeyed; never wore a dress-coat counter to good form. He was an excellent listener—especially to people of title; was a judicious flatterer—a good friend and a good fellow; dining out five days in the week, and living thus till ninety: and if he had lived till now, I think he would have died—dining out.

Mr. Robinson was not very strong in literary criticism. I quote a bit from his *Diary,* that will show, perhaps as well as any, his method and range. It is dated *June 6, 1812:*

"Sent *Peter Bell* to Chas. Lamb. To my surprise, he does not like it. He complains of the slowness of the narrative—as if that were not the *art* of the poet. He says Wordsworth has great thoughts, but has left them out here. [And then continues in his own person.] In the perplexity arising from the diverse judgments of those to whom I am accustomed to look up, I have no resource but in the determination to disregard all opinions, and trust to the simple impression made on my own mind. When Lady Mackintosh was once stating to Coleridge her disregard of the beauties of nature, which men commonly affect to admire, he said his friend

Wordsworth had described her feeling, and quoted three lines from *'Peter Bell'*:

'A primrose by a river brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.'

" 'Yes,' said Lady Mackintosh—'that is precisely my case.' "

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

On the same page of that Diary—where I go to verify this quotation—is this entry:

"At four o'clock dined in the [Temple] Hall with De Quincey,[1] who was very civil to me, and cordially invited me to visit his cottage in Cumberland. Like myself, he is an enthusiast for Wordsworth. His person is small, his complexion fair, and his air and manner are those of a sickly and enfeebled man."[2]

Some twenty-seven years before the date of this encounter, the sickly looking man was

[1] Thomas De Quincey, b. 1785; d. 1859. *Confessions of an English Opium Eater,* 1821. Complete edition of works, 1852–55. *Life and Writings:* H. A. Page, 2 vols. London, 1877.

[2] The entry is of 1812, p. 391, chap. xv. Macmillan's edition. London, 1869.

born near to Manchester, his father being a well-to-do merchant there—whose affairs took him often to Portugal and Madeira, and whose invalidism kept him there so much that the son scarce knew him;—remembers only how his father came home one day to his great country house—pale, and propped up with pillows in the back of his carriage—came to die. His mother, left with wealth enough for herself and children, was of a stern Calvinistic sort; which fact gives a streak of unpleasant color here and there to the son's reminiscences. He is presently at odds with her about the Bath school—where he is taught—she having moved into Somersetshire, whereabout she knows Mistress Hannah More; the boy comes to know this lady too, with much reverence. The son is at odds with his mother again about Eton (where, though never a scholar, he has glimpses of George III.—gets a little grunted talk even, from the old king) —and is again at odds with the mother about the Manchester Grammar School: so much at odds here, that he takes the bit fairly in his mouth, and runs away with *Euripides* in his pocket. Then he goes wandering in Wales—gypsy-like—and from there strikes across country blindly to London, where he becomes

gypsy indeed. He bargains with Jews to advance money on his expectations: and with this money for "sinker," he sounds a depth of sin and misery which we may guess at, by what we know, but which in their fulness, even his galloping pen never told. Into some of those depths his friends traced him, and patched up a truce, which landed him in Oxford.

Quiet and studious here at first—he is represented as a rare talker, a little given to wine —writing admiring letters to Wordsworth and others, who were his gods in those days; falling somehow into taste for that drug which for so many years held him in its grip, body and soul. The Oxford career being finished after a sort, there are saunterings through London streets again—evenings with the Lambs, with Godwin, and excursions to Somersetshire and the Lake country, where he encounters and gives nearer worship to the poetic gods of his idolatry. Always shy, but earnest; most interesting to strangers—with his pale face, high brow and lightning glances; talking too with a winning flow and an exuberance of epithet that somewhiles amounts to brilliancy: no wonder he was tenderly entreated by good Miss Words-

worth; no wonder the poet of the "Doe of Rylstone" enjoyed the titillation of such fresh, bright praises!

So De Quincey at twenty-four became householder near to Grasmere—in the cottage I spoke of in the opening of the chapter—once occupied by Wordsworth and later by Hartley Coleridge. There, on that pretty shelf of the hills—scarce lifted above Rydal-water, he gathers his books—studies the mountains—provokes the gossip of all the pretty Dalesmen's daughters—lives there a bachelor, eight years or more—ranging round and round in bright autumnal days with the sturdy John Wilson (of the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*)—cultivating intimacy with poor crazy Lloyd (who lived nearby)—studying all anomalous characters with curious intensity, and finding anomalies where others found none. Meantime and through all, his sensibilities are kept wrought to fever heat by the opiate drinks—always flanking him at his table; and he, so dreadfully wonted to those devilish drafts, that—on some occasions—he actually consumes within the twenty-four hours the equivalent of seven full wine-glasses of laudanum! No wonder that the quiet Dales-people looked dubiously at the light burning in those cottage

windows far into the gray of morning, and counted the pale-faced, big-headed man for something uncanny.

In these days comes about that strange episode of his mad attachment to that little elfin child—Catharine Wordsworth—of whom the poet-father wrote:—

"Solitude to her
Was blithe society, who filled the air
With gladness and involuntary songs.
Light were her sallies, as the tripping fawn's,
Forth startled from the form where she lay couched;
Unthought of, unexpected, as the stir
Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow flowers."

Yet De Quincey, arrogantly interpreting the deep-seated affections of that father's heart, says, "She was no favorite with Wordsworth;" but he "himself was blindly, doatingly, fascinated" by this child of three. And of her death, before she is four, when De Quincey is on a visit in London, he says, with crazy exaggeration:

"Never, perhaps, from the foundations of those mighty hills was there so fierce a convulsion of grief as mastered my faculties on receiving that heart-shattering news. . . . I had always

viewed her as an impersonation of the dawn and the spirit of infancy. . . . I returned hastily to Grasmere; stretched myself every night, for more than two months running, upon her grave; in fact often passed the night upon her grave . . . in mere intensity of sick, frantic yearning after neighborhood to the darling of my heart."[1]

This is a type of his ways of feeling, and of his living, and of his speech—tending easily to all manner of extravagance: black and white are too tame for his nerve-exaltation; if a friend looks sharply, "his eye glares;" if disturbed, he has a "tumult of the brain;" if he doubles his fist, his gestures are the wildest; and a well-built son and daughter of a neighbor Dalesman are the images of "Coriolanus and Valeria."

MARRIAGE AND OTHER FLIGHTS

At thirty-one, or thereabout, De Quincey married the honest daughter of an honest yeoman of the neighborhood. She was sensible (except her marriage invalidate the term), was kindly, was long-suffering, and yet was very human. I suspect the interior of that cottage

[1] Page 215; vol. ii., *Reminiscences.* Boston Edition.

fugitives, I know not whether from the good cause or the bad; darkness and lights; tempest and human faces; and at last, with the sense that all was lost, female forms, and the features that were worth all the world to me, and but a moment allowed—and clasped hands and heart-breaking partings, and then everlasting farewells! and with a sigh such as the caves of hell sighed when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of Death, the sound was reverberated—everlasting farewells! and again, and yet again reverberated—everlasting farewells!"

Some years later he drifts again to Grasmere, but only to pluck up root and branch that home with wife and children,—so wonted now to the pleasant sounds and sights of the Lake waters and the mountains—and to transport them to Edinboro', where, through Professor Wilson, he has promise of work which had begun to fail him in London.

There,—though he has the introduction which a place at the tavern table of Father Ambrose gives—he is a lonely man; pacing solitary, sometimes in the shadow of the Castle Rock, sometimes in the shadow of the old houses of the Canongate; always preoccupied, close-lipped, brooding, and never without that wretched opium-comforter at his home. It

was in *Blackwood* (1827) he first published the well known essay on "Murder as a Fine Art,"—perhaps the best known of all he wrote; there, too, he committed to paper, in the stress of his necessities, those sketchy *Reminiscences* of his Lake life; loose, disjointed, ill-considered, often sent to press without any revision and full of strange coined words. I note at random, such as *novel-ish erector* (for builder), *lambencies, apricating, aculeated;* using words not rarely, etymologically, and for some recondite sense attaching. Worse than this, there is a dreary tittle-tattle and a pulling away of decent domestic drapery from the lives of those he had professed to love and honor; tedious expatiation, too, upon the scandal-mongering of servant-maids, with illustrations by page on page; and yet, for the matter of gossip, he is himself as fertile as a seamstress or a monthly nurse, and as overflowing and brazen as any newspaper you may name.

But here and there, even amidst his dreariest pages, you see, quivering—some gleams of his old strange power—a thrust of keen thought that bewilders you by its penetration —a glowing fancy that translates one to wondrous heights of poetic vision; and oftener

yet, and over and over, shows that mastery of the finesse of language by which he commands the most attenuated reaches of his thought, and whips them into place with a snap and a sting.

Yet, when all is said, I think we must count the best that he wrote only amongst the curiosities of literature, rather than with the manna that fell for fainting souls in the wilderness.

De Quincey died in Edinburgh in 1859, aged seventy-four.

CHAPTER II

In our last chapter we took a breezy morning walk amid the Lake scenery of England—more particularly that portion of it which lies between the old homes of Wordsworth and of Southey; we found it a thirteen-mile stretch of road, coiling along narrow meadows and over gray heights—beside mountains and mountain tarns—with Helvellyn lifting mid-way and Skiddaw towering at the end. We had our talk of Dr. Southey—so brave at his work—so generous in his home charities—so stiff in his Churchism and latter-day Toryism—with a very keen eye for beauty; yet writing poems—stately and masterful—which long ago went to the top-shelves, and stay there.

We had our rough and ready interviews with that first of "War Correspondents"—Henry Crabb Robinson—who knew all the prominent men of this epoch, and has given us such entertaining chit-chat about them, as we all listen to, and straightway forget. After-

wards we had a look at that strange, intellectual, disorderly creature De Quincey—he living a long while in the Lake Country—and in his more inspired moments seeming to carry us by his swift words, into that mystical region lying beyond the borders of what we know and see. He swayed men; but he rarely taught them, or fed them.

CHRISTOPHER NORTH

We still linger about those charmingest of country places; and by a wooden gateway—adjoining the approach to Windermere Hotel—enter upon the "Elleray woods," amid which lived—eighty years ago—that stalwart friend of De Quincey's, whose acquaintance he made among the Lakes, and who, like himself, was a devoted admirer of Wordsworth. Indeed, I think it was at the home of the latter that De Quincey first encountered the tall, lusty John Wilson—brimful of enthusiasm and all country ardors; brimful, too, of gush, and all poetic undulations of speech. He[1] was a native of

[1] John Wilson, b. 1785; d. 1854; better known as Christopher North, his pseudonym in *Blackwood*. *The Isle of Palms,* 1811; *The City of the Plague,* 1816; *Recreations of Christopher North,* 1842. In 1851 a

Paisley—his father having been a rich manufacturer there—and had come to spend his abundant enthusiasms and his equally abundant moneys between Wordsworth and the mountains and Windermere. He has his fleet of yachts and barges upon the lake; he knows every pool where any trout lurk—every height that gives far-off views. He is a pugilist, a swimmer, an oarsman—making the hills echo with his jollity, and dashing off through the springy heather with that slight, seemingly frail De Quincey in his wake—who only reaches to his shoulder, but who is all compact of nerve and muscle. For Greek they are fairly mated, both by love and learning; and they can and do chant together the choral songs of heathen tragedies.

This yellow-haired, blue-eyed giant, John Wilson—not so well-known now as he was sixty years ago—we collegians greatly admired in that far-off day. He had written the *Isle of Palms,* and was responsible for much of the wit and dash and merriment which sparkled over the early pages of *Blackwood's Magazine* —in the chapters of the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*

civil-list pension of £300 was conferred upon him. His younger brother, James Wilson, was a well-known naturalist, and author of *The Rod and the Gun.*

and in many a paper besides:—he had his first university training at Glasgow; had a brief love-episode there also, which makes a prettily coy appearance on the pleasant pages of the biography of Wilson which a daughter (Mrs. Gordon) has compiled. After Glasgow came Oxford; and a characteristic bit of his later writing, which I cite, will show you how Oxford impressed him:—

"Having bidden farewell to our sweet native Scotland, and kissed ere we parted, the grass and the flowers with a show of filial tears—having bidden farewell to all her glens, now a-glimmer in the blended light of imagination and memory, with their cairns and kirks, their low-chimneyed huts, and their high-turreted halls, their free-flowing rivers, and lochs dashing like seas—we were all at once buried not in the Cimmerian gloom, but the Cerulean glitter of Oxford's Ancient Academic groves. The genius of the place fell upon us. Yes! we hear now, in the renewed delight of the awe of our youthful spirit, the pealing organ in that Chapel called the Beautiful; we see the Saints on the stained windows; at the Altar the picture of One up Calvary meekly ascending. It seemed then that our hearts had no need even of the kindness of kindred—of the country where we were born, and that had received the continued blessings of our

enlarging love! Yet away went, even then, sometimes, our thoughts to Scotland, like carrier-pigeons wafting love messages beneath their unwearied wings."[1]

We should count this, and justly, rather over-fine writing nowadays. Yet it is throughout stamped with the peculiarities of Christopher North; he cannot help his delightfully wanton play with language and sentiment; and into whatever sea of topics he plunged—early or late in life—he always came up glittering with the beads and sparkles of a highly charged rhetoric. Close after Oxford comes that idyllic life[2] in Windermere to which I have referred. Four or more years pass there; his trees grow there; his new roads—hewn through the forests—wind there; he plots a new house there;

[1] "Old North and Young North," *Blackwood,* June, 1828.

[2] Dorothy Wordsworth, under date of 1809, writes to her friend, Lady Beaumont—"Surely I have spoken to you of Mr. Wilson, a young man of some fortune, who has built a house in a very fine situation not far from Bowness. . . . He has from boyhood been a passionate admirer of my brother's writings. [And again.] We all, including Mr. De Quincey and Coleridge, have been to pay the Bachelor (Wilson) a visit, and we enjoyed ourselves very much in a pleasant mixture of merriment, and thoughtful discourse. . . . He is now twenty-three years of age."—Coleorton *Letters,* vol. ii, p. 91.

he climbs the mountains; he is busy with his boats. Somewhat later he marries; he does not lose his old love for the poets of the Greek anthology; he has children born to him; he breeds game fowls, and looks after them as closely as a New England farmer's wife after her poultry; but with him poetry and poultry go together. There are old diaries of his—into which his daughter gives us a peep—that show such entries as this:—"The small Paisley hen set herself 6th of July, with no fewer than nine eggs;" and again—"Red pullet in Josie's barn was set with eight eggs on Thursday;" and square against such memoranda, and in script as careful, will appear some bit of verse like this:—

"Oh, fairy child! what can I wish for thee?
Like a perennial flowret may'st thou be,
That spends its life in beauty and in bliss;
Soft on thee fall the breath of time,
And still retain in heavenly clime
The bloom that charms in this."

He wrote, too, while living there above Windermere, his poem of the *Isle of Palms;* having a fair success in the early quarter of this century, but which was quickly put out of sight and hearing by the brisker, martial music of

Scott, and by the later and more vigorous and resonant verse of Byron.

Indeed, Wilson's poetry was not such as we would have looked for from one who was a "varra bad un to lick" at a wrestling bout, and who made the splinters fly when his bludgeon went thwacking into a page of controversial prose. His verse is tender; it is graceful; it is delicate; it is full of languors too; and it is tiresome—a gentle girlish treble of sound it has, that you can hardly associate with this brawny mass of manhood.

WILSON IN SCOTLAND

BUT all that delightful life amidst the woods of Elleray—with its game-cocks, and boats, and mountain rambles, and shouted chorus of Prometheus—comes to a sharp end. The inherited fortune of the poet, by some criminal carelessness or knavery of a relative, goes in a day; and our fine stalwart wrestler must go to Edinboro' to wrestle with the fates. There he coquets for a time with law; but presently falls into pleasant affiliation with old Mr. Blackwood (who was a remarkable man in his way) in the conduct of his magazine. And then came the

trumpet blasts of mingled wit, bravado, and tenderness, which broke into those pages, and which made young college men in England or Scotland or America, fling up their hats for Christopher North. Not altogether a safe guide, I think, as a rhetorician; too much bounce in him; too little self-restraint; too much of glitter and iridescence; but, on the other hand—bating some blackguardism—he is brimful of life and heartiness and merriment—lighted up with scholarly hues of color.

There was associated with Wilson in those days, in work upon *Blackwood,* a young man—whom we may possibly not have occasion to speak of again, and yet who is worthy of mention. I mean J. G. Lockhart,[1] who afterwards became son-in-law and the biographer of Walter Scott—a slight young fellow in that day, very erect and prim; wearing his hat well forward on his heavy brows, and so shading a face that was thin, clean cut, handsome, and which had almost the darkness of a Spaniard's. He put his rapier-like thrusts into a good many

[1]John Gibson Lockhart, b. 1794; d. 1854. Connected with *Blackwood,* 1818; *Adam Blair,* 1822; with *Quarterly Review,* 1826–53; *Ancient Spanish Ballads,* 1823; *Memoirs of Walter Scott,* 1836–38. Recent *Life of Lockhart,* by Andrew Lang. 2 vols., 8vo. Nimmo, London.

papers which the two wrought at together. All his life he loved literary digs with his stiletto—which was very sharp—and when he left Edinboro' to edit the *Quarterly Review* in London (as he did in after days) he took his stiletto with him. There are scenes in that unevenly written Lockhart story of *Adam Blair*—hardly known now—which for thrilling passion, blazing out of clear sufficiencies of occasion, would compare well with kindred scenes of Scott's own, and which score deeper colorings of human woe and loves and remorse than belong to most modern stories; not lighted, indeed, with humor; not entertaining with anecdote; not embroidered with archæologic knowledge; not rattling with coruscating social fireworks, but—subtle, psychologic, touching the very marrow of our common manhood with a pen both sharp and fine. We remember him, however, most gratefully as the charming biographer of Scott, and as the accomplished translator of certain Spanish ballads into which he has put—under flowing English verse—all the clashing of Cordovan castanets, and all the jingle of the war stirrups of the Moors.

We return now to Professor Wilson and propose to tell you how he came by that title. It was after only a few years of work in connec-

tion with *Blackwood* that the Chair of Moral Philosophy in Edinboro' University—which had been held by Dugald Stewart, and later by Dr. Thomas Brown—fell vacant; and at once the name of Wilson was pressed by his friends for the position. It was not a little odd that a man best known by two delicate poems, and by a bold swashbuckler sort of magazine writing should be put forward—in such a staid city as Edinboro', and against such a candidate as Sir William Hamilton—for a Chair which had been held by Dugald Stewart! But he *was* so put forward, and successfully; Walter Scott and the Government coming to his aid. Upon this, he went resolutely to study in the new line marked out for him; his rods and gun were, for the time, hung upon the wall; his wrestling frolics and bouts at quarter-staff, and suppers at the Ambrose tavern, were laid under limitations. He put a conscience and a pertinacity into his labor that he had never put to any intellectual work before.[1] But there were very many people in

[1] Mrs. Gordon says, quoting from her mother's record: Mr. Wilson is as busy studying as possible; indeed, he has little time before him for his great task; he says it will take one month at least to make out a catalogue of the books he has to read and consult. I am perfectly appalled when I go into the dining-room and see all

Edinboro' who had been aggrieved by the appointment—largely, too, among those from whom his pupils would come. There was, naturally, great anxiety among his friends respecting the opening of the first session. An eye-witness says:—

"I went prepared to join in a cabal which was formed to put him down. The lecture-room was crowded to the ceiling. Such a collection of hard-browed, scowling Scotsmen, muttering over their knob-sticks, I never saw. The Professor entered with a bold step, amid profound silence. Every one expected some deprecatory, or propitiatory introduction of himself and his subject, upon which the mass was to decide against him, reason or no reason; but he began with a voice of thunder right into the matter of his lecture, kept up —unflinchingly and unhesitatingly, without a pause—a flow of rhetoric such as Dugald Stewart or Dr. Brown, his predecessors, never delivered in the same place. Not a word—not a mur-

the folios, quartos, and duodecimos, with which it is literally filled; and the poor culprit himself sitting in the midst, with a beard as long and red as an ancient carrot; for he has not shaved for a fortnight. P. 215, *Memoir of John Wilson.* We are sorry to see that Mr. Lang, in his recent *Life of Lockhart* (1897), pp. 135-6-7-8, has put some disturbing cross-coloring (perhaps justly) upon the pleasant portrait which Mrs. Gordon has drawn of Christopher North.

mur escaped his captivated audience; and at the end they gave him a right-down unanimous burst of applause."[1]

From that time forth, for thirty years or more, John Wilson held the place, and won a popularity with his annual relays of pupils that was unexampled and unshaken. Better lectures in his province may very possibly have been written by others elsewhere—more close, more compact, more thoroughly thought out, more methodic. His were not patterned after Reid and Stewart; indeed, not patterned at all; not wrought into a burnished system, with the pivots and cranks of the old school-men all in their places. But they made up a series—continuous, and lapping each into each, by easy confluence of topic—of discourses on moral duties and on moral relations, with full and brilliant illustrative talk—sometimes in his heated moments taking on the gush and exuberance of a poem; other times bristling with reminiscences; yet full of suggestiveness, and telling as much, I think, on the minds of his eager and receptive students as if the rhetorical brilliancies had all been plucked away, and

[1]Mrs. Gordon's *Memoir of John Wilson*, p. 222. The statement is credited to the author of *The Two Cosmos*. Middleton, New York, 1863.

some master of a duller craft had reduced his words to a stiff, logical paradigm.

From this time forward Professor Wilson lived a quiet, domestic, yet fully occupied life. He wrote enormously for the magazine with which his name had become identified; there is scarce a break in his thirty years' teachings in the university; there are sometimes brief interludes of travel; journeys to London; flights to the Highlands; there are breaks in his domestic circle, breaks in the larger circle of his friends; there are twinges of the gout and there come wrinkles of age; but he is braver to resist than most; and for years on years everybody knew that great gaunt figure, with blue eyes and hair flying wild, striding along Edinboro' streets.

His poems have indeed almost gone down under the literary horizon of to-day; but one who has known *Blackwood* of old, can hardly wander anywhere amongst the Highlands of Scotland without pleasant recollections of Christopher North and of the musical bravuras of his speech.

THOMAS CAMPBELL

ANOTHER Scotsman, who is worthy of our attention for a little time, is one of a different

order; he is stiff, he is prim, he is almost priggish; he is so in his young days and he keeps so to the very last.

A verse or two from one of the little poems he wrote will bring him to your memory:

> "On Linden when the sun was low,
> All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
> And dark as winter was the flow,
> Of Iser, rolling rapidly."

And again:

> "Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
> Then rushed the steed to battle driven,
> And louder than the bolts of heaven,
> Far flashed the red artillery."

If Thomas Campbell[1] had never written anything more than that page-long story of the "Battle of Hohenlinden," his name would have gone into all the anthologies, and his verse into all those school-books where boys for seventy years now have pounded at his martial metre in furies of declamation. And yet this bit of martial verse, so full of the breath of battle, was, at the date of its writing, rejected by the

[1] Thomas Campbell, b. 1777; d. 1844. *The Pleasures of Hope*, 1799; *Gertrude of Wyoming*, 1809; *Life of Petrarch*, 1841; Dr. Beattie's *Life*, 1850.

editor of a small provincial journal in Scotland—as not coming up to the true poetic standard![1]

I have spoken of Campbell as a Scotsman; though after only a short stay in Scotland—following his university career at Glasgow—and a starveling tour upon the Continent (out of which flashed "Hohenlinden")—he went to London; and there or thereabout spent the greater part of the residue of a long life. He had affiliations of a certain sort with America, out of which may possibly have grown his *Gertrude of Wyoming;* his father was for much time a merchant in Falmouth, Virginia, about 1770; being however a strong loyalist, he returned in 1776. A brother and an uncle of the poet became established in this country, and an American Campbell of this stock was connected by marriage with the family of Patrick Henry.

The first *coup* by which Campbell won his literary spurs, was a bright, polished poem—with its couplets all in martinet-like order—called the *Pleasures of Hope.* We all know it, if for nothing more, by reason of the sympathetic allusion to the woes of Poland:

[1] *Maclise Portrait Gallery,* London, 1883 (which cites in confirmation, *Notes and Queries,* December 13, 1862).

"Ah, bloodiest picture in the book of time!
Sarmatia fell, unwept, without a crime;
Found not a generous friend, a pitying foe,
Strength in her arms nor mercy in her woe!
Dropped from her nerveless grasp the shattered spear,
Closed her bright eye and curbed her high career,
Hope for a season bade the world farewell,
And freedom shrieked as Kosciusko fell!"

Even at so late a date as the death of Campbell (1844), when they buried him in Westminster Abbey, close upon the tomb of Sheridan, some grateful Pole secured a handful of earth from the grave of Kosciusko to throw upon the coffin of the poet.

But in addition to its glow of liberalism, this first poem of Campbell was, measured by all the old canons of verse, thoroughly artistic. Its pauses, its rhymes, its longs and shorts were of the best prize order; even its errors in matters of fact have an academic tinge—as, for instance,—

"On Erie's banks, where tigers steal along!"

The truth is, Mr. Campbell was never strong in his natural history; he does not scruple to

put flamingoes and palm trees into the valley of Wyoming. Another reason why the first poem of Campbell's, written when he was only twenty-one, came to such success, was the comparatively clear field it had. The date of publication was at the end of the century. Byron was in his boyhood; Scott had not published his *Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805); Southey had printed only his *Joan of Arc* (1796), which few people read; the same may be said of Landor's *Gebir,* (1797); Cowper was an old story; Rogers's *Pleasures of Memory* (1792), and Moore's translation of *Anacreon* (1799–1800), were the more current things with which people who loved fresh poetry could regale themselves. The *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordsworth and Coleridge had indeed been printed, perhaps a year or two before, down in Bristol; but scarce any one read *these;* few bought them;[1] and yet—in that copy of the *Lyrical Ballads* was lying *perdu*—almost unknown and uncared for—the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner."

[1]De Quincey says that he was the only man in all Europe who quoted Wordsworth as early as 1802. Yet, *per contra,* the *Lyrical Ballads* had warm praises from Jeffrey (in *Monthly Review*) and from Southey (in *Critical*)—showing that the finer ears had caught the new notes from Helicon.

Gertrude of Wyoming, a poem, written at Sydenham, near London, about 1807, and which, sixty years ago, every good American who was collecting books thought it necessary to place upon his shelves, I rarely find there now. It has not the rhetorical elaboration of Campbell's first poem; never won its success; there are bits of war in it, and of massacre, that are gorgeously encrimsoned, and which are laced through and through with sounds of fife and war-whoop; but the landscape is a disorderly exaggeration (I have already hinted at its palm trees) and its love-tale has only the ardors of a stage scene in it; we know where the tragedy is coming in, and gather up our wraps so as to be ready when the curtain falls.

He was a born actor—in need (for his best work) of the footlights, the on-lookers, the trombone, the bass-drum. He never glided into victories of the pen by natural inevitable movement of brain or heart; he stopped always and everywhere to consider his *pose*.

There is little of interest in Campbell's personal history; he married a cousin; lived, as I said, mostly in London, or its immediate neighborhood. He had two sons—one dying young, and the other of weak mind—lingering many years—a great grief and source of anxiety to his father, who had the reputation of being ex-

acting and stern in his family. He edited for a long time the *New Monthly Magazine,* and wrote much for it, but is represented to have been, in its conduct, careless, hypercritical, and dilatory. He lectured, too, before the Royal Institute on poetry; read oratorically and showily—his subject matter being semi-philosophical, with a great air of learning and academically dry; there was excellent system in his discourses, and careful thinking on themes remote from most people's thought. He wrote some historical works which are not printed nowadays; his life of Mrs. Siddons is bad; his life of Petrarch is but little better; some poems he published late in life are quite unworthy of him and are never read. Nevertheless, this prim, captious gentleman wrote many things which have the ring of truest poetry and which will be dear to the heart of England as long as English ships sail forth to battle.

A MINSTREL OF THE BORDER

YET another Scotsman whose name will not be forgotten—whether British ships go to battle, or idle at the docks—is Walter Scott.[1] I scarce

[1] Walter Scott, b. 1771; d. 1832; *Lay of Last Minstrel,* 1805; *Marmion,* 1808; *Lady of the Lake,* 1810; *Waverley,* 1814; *Woodstock,* 1826; *Life of Napoleon,* 1827; *Life,* by Lockhart, 1832–37.

know how to begin to speak of him. We all know him so well—thanks to the biography of his son-in-law, Lockhart, which is almost Boswellian in its minuteness, and has dignity besides. We know—as we know about a neighbor's child—of his first struggles with illness, wrapped in a fresh sheepskin, upon the heathery hills by Smailholme Tower; we know of the strong, alert boyhood that succeeded; he following, with a firm seat and free rein—amongst other game—the old wives' tales and border ballads which, thrumming in his receptive ears, put the Edinboro' law studies into large confusion. Swift after this comes the hurry-scurry of a boyish love-chase—beginning in Grey Friars church-yard; she, however, who sprung the race—presently doubles upon him, and is seen no more; and he goes lumbering forward to another fate. It was close upon these experiences that some friends of his printed privately his ballad of *William and Helen,* founded on the German Lenore:—

"Tramp, tramp! along the land they rode!
Splash, splash! along the sea!
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee!"

And the spirit and dash of those four lines

were quickly recognized as marking a new power in Scotch letters; and an echo of them, or of their spirit, in some shape or other, may be found, I think, in all his succeeding poems and in all the tumults and struggles of his life. The elder Scott does not like this philandering with rhyme; it will spoil the law, and a solid profession, he thinks; and true enough it does. For the *Border Minstrelsy* comes spinning its delightfully musical and tender stories shortly after Lenore; and a little later appears his first long poem—the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*—which waked all Scotland and England to the melody of the new master. He was thirty-four then; ripening later than Campbell, who at twenty-one had published his *Pleasures of Hope*. There was no kinship in the methods of the two poets; Campbell all precision, and nice balance, delicate adjustment of language —stepping from point to point in his progress with all grammatic precautions and with well-poised poetic steps and demi-volts, as studied as a dancing master's; while Scott dashed to his purpose with a seeming abandonment of care, and a swift pace that made the "pebbles fly." Just as unlike, too, was this racing freedom of Scott's—which dragged the mists away from the Highlands, and splashed his colors of

gray, and of the purple of blooming heather over the moors—from that other strain of verse, with its introspections and deeper folded charms, which in the hands of Wordsworth was beginning to declare itself humbly and coyly, but as yet with only the rarest applause. I cannot make this distinction clearer than by quoting a little landscape picture—let us say from *Marmion*—and contrasting with it another from Wordsworth, which was composed six years or more before *Marmion* was published. First, then, from Scott—and nothing prettier and quieter of rural sort belongs to him,—

"November sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sear;
Late gazing down the steepy linn
That hems our little garden in."

(I may remark, in passing, that this is an actual description of Scott's home surroundings at Ashestiel.)

"Low in its dark and narrow glen
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,
So feeble trilled the streamlet through;
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Through brush and briar, no longer green,

An angry brook it sweeps the glade,
Breaks over rock and wild cascade,
And foaming brown with double speed
Marries its waters to the Tweed."

There it is—a completed picture; do what you will with it! Reading it, is like a swift, glad stepping along the borders of the brook.

Now listen for a little to Wordsworth; it is a scrap from Tintern Abbey:—

"Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
The hermit sits alone."

(Here is more than the tangible picture; the smoke wreaths have put unseen dwellers there); and again:—

"O Sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

I have learned
To look on Nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes

The still, sad music of humanity!
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean and the living air
And the blue sky, and in the mind of men
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I
still
A lover of the meadows and the woods
And mountains."

This will emphasize the distinction, to which I would call attention, in the treatment of landscape by the two poets: Wordsworth putting *his* all on a simmer with humanities and far-reaching meditative hopes and languors; and Scott throwing windows wide open to the sky, and saying only—look—and be glad!

In those days Wordsworth had one reader where Scott had a hundred; and the one reader was apologetic and shy, and the hundred were loud and gushing. I think the number of their respective readers is more evenly balanced nowadays; and it is the readers of Scott who

are beginning to be apologetic. Indeed I have a half consciousness of putting myself on this page in that category:—As if the Homeric toss and life and play, and large sweep of rivers, and of battalions and winnowed love-notes, and clang of trumpets, and moaning of the sea, which rise and fall in the pages of the *Minstrel* and of *Marmion*—needed apology! Apology or no, I think Scott's poems will be read for a good many years to come. The guide books and Highland travellers—and high-thoughted travellers—will keep them alive—if the critics do not; and I think you will find no better fore-reading for a trip along the Tweed or through the Trosachs than *Marmion,* and the *Lady of the Lake.*

THE WAVERLEY DISPENSATION

MEANTIME, our author has married—a marriage, Goldwin Smith says, of "intellectual disparagement"; which I suppose means that Mrs. Scott was not learned and bookish—as she certainly was not; but she was honest, true-hearted, and domestic. Mr. Redding profanely says that she was used to plead, "Walter, my dear, you must write a new book, for I want another silk dress." I think this is apocryphal; and there is good reason to believe that she

gave a little hearty home huzza at each one of Mr. Scott's quick succeeding triumphs.

Our author has also changed his home; first from the pretty little village of Lasswade, which is down by Dalkeith, to Ashestiel by the Yarrow; and thence again to a farm-house, near to that unfortunate pile of Abbotsford, which stands on the Tweed bank, shadowed by the trees he planted, and shadowed yet more heavily by the story of his misfortunes. I notice a disposition in some recent writers to disparage this notable country home as pseudo-Gothic and flimsy. This gives a false impression of a structure which, though it lack that singleness of expression and subordination of details which satisfy a professional critic, does yet embody in a singularly interesting way, and with solid construction, all the aspirations, tastes, clannish vanities and archæologic whims of the great novelist. The castellated tower is there to carry the Scottish standard, and the cloister to keep alive reverent memory of old religious houses; and the miniature Court gate, with its warder's horn; and the Oriole windows, whose details are, maybe, snatched from Kenilworth; the mass, too, is impressive and smacks all over of Scott's personality and of the traditions he cherished.

WALK ON TWEED-SIDE

I am tempted to introduce here some notes of a visit made to this locality very many years ago. I had set off on a foot-pilgrimage from the old border town of Berwick-on-Tweed; had kept close along the banks of the river, seeing men drawing nets for salmon, whose silvery scales flashed in the morning sun. All around swept those charming fields of Tweed-side, green with the richest June growth; here and there were shepherds at their sheep washing; old Norham Castle presently lifted its gray buttresses into view; then came the long Coldstream bridge, with its arches shimmering in the flood below; and after this the palace of the Duke of Roxburgh. In thus following up leisurely the Tweed banks from Berwick, I had slept the first night at Kelso; had studied the great fine bit of ruin which is there, and had caught glimpses of Teviot-dale and of the Eildon Hills; had wandered out of my way for a sight of Smailholme tower, and of Sandy Knowe—both associated with Scott's childhood; I passed Dryburgh, where he lies buried, and at last on an evening of early June, 1845, a stout oarsman ferried me across the Tweed and landed me in Melrose.

I slept at the George Inn—dreaming (as many a young wayfarer in those lands has

since done), of Ivanhoe and Rebecca, and border wars and *Old Mortality*. Next morning, after a breakfast upon trout taken from some near stream (very likely the Yarrow or the Gala-water), I strolled two miles or so along the road which followed the Tweed bank upon the southern side, and by a green foot-gate entered the Abbotsford grounds. The forest trees—not over high at that time—were those which the master had planted. From his favorite outdoor seat, sheltered by a thicket of arbor-vitæ, could be caught a glimpse of the rippled surface of the Tweed and of the turrets of the house.

It was all very quiet—quiet in the wood-walks; quiet as you approached the court-yard; the master dead; the family gone; I think there was a yelp from some young hound in an out-building, and a twitter from some birds I did not know; there was the unceasing murmur of the river. Besides these sounds, the silence was unbroken; and when I rang the bell at the entrance door, the jangle of it was very startling; startling a little terrier, too, whose quick, sharp bark rang noisily through the outer court.

Only an old house-keeper was in charge, who had fallen into that dreadful parrot-like way of

telling visitors what things were best worth seeing—which frets one terribly. What should you or I care (fresh from *Guy Mannering* or *Kenilworth*) whether a bit of carving came from Jedburgh or Kelso? or about the jets in the chandelier, or the way in which a Russian Grand Duke wrote his name in the visitors' book?

But when we catch sight of the desk at which the master wrote, or of the chair in which he sat, and of his shoes and coat and cane—looking as if they might have been worn yesterday—these seem to bring us nearer to the man who has written so much to cheer and to charm the world. There was, too, a little box in the corridor, simple and iron-bound, with the line written below it, "Post will close at two." It was as if we had heard the master of the house say it. Perhaps the notice was in his handwriting (he had been active there in 1831–2—just thirteen years before)—perhaps not; but—somehow—more than the library, or the portrait bust, or the chatter of the well-meaning house-keeper, it brought back the halting old gentleman in his shooting-coat, and with ivory-headed cane—hobbling with a vigorous step along the corridor, to post in that iron-bound box a packet—maybe a chapter of *Woodstock*.

I have spoken of the vacant house—family gone: The young Sir Walter Scott, of the British army, and heir to the estate—was at that date (1845) absent in the Indies; and only two years thereafter died at sea on his voyage home. Charles Scott, the only brother of the younger Sir Walter, died in 1841.[1] Miss Anne Scott, the only unmarried daughter of the author of *Waverley,* died—worn-out with tenderest care of mother and father, and broken-hearted—in 1833. Her only sister, Mrs. (Sophia Scott) Lockhart, died in 1837. Her oldest son—John Hugh, familiarly known as "Hugh Little John"—the crippled boy, for whom had been written the *Tales of a Grandfather,* and the darling of the two households upon Tweed-side—died in 1831. I cannot forbear quoting here a charming little memorial of him, which, within the present year, has appeared in Mr. Lang's *Life of Lockhart:*

"A figure as of one of Charles Lamb's dream-children haunts the little beck at Chiefswood, and

[1] He was clerk in Her Majesty's Foreign Office in London. Carlyle says in a letter (of date of 1842), "I have the liveliest impression of that good honest Scotch face and character, though never in contact with the young man but once."—Lang's *Lockhart,* p. 232, vol. ii.

on that haugh at Abbotsford, where Lockhart read the manuscript of the *Fortunes of Nigel,* fancy may see 'Hugh Little John,' 'throwing stones into the burn,' for so he called the Tweed. While children study the *Tales of a Grandfather,* he does not want friends in this world to remember and envy the boy who had Sir Walter to tell him stories."—P. 75, vol. ii.

A younger son of Lockhart, Walter Scott, by name, became, at the death of the younger Walter Scott, inheritor of all equities in the landed estate upon Tweed-side, and the proper Laird of Abbotsford. His story is a short and a sad one; he was utterly unworthy, and died almost unbefriended at Versailles in January, 1853.

His father, J. G. Lockhart, acknowledging a picture of this son, under date of 1843, in a letter addressed to his daughter Charlotte—(later Mrs. Hope-Scott,[1] and mother of the present proprietress of Abbotsford), writes with a grief he could not cover:—

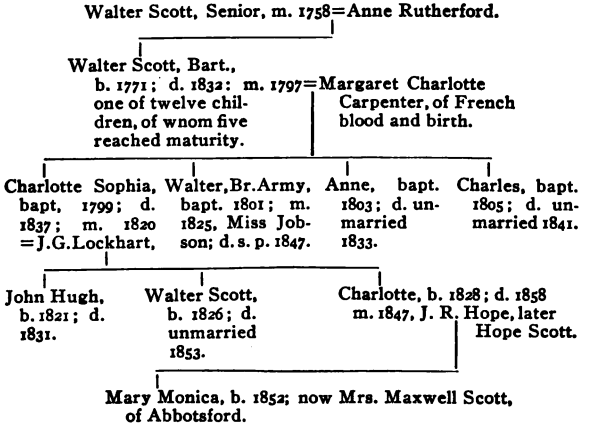
"I am not sorry to have it by me, though it breaks my heart to recall the date. It is of the sweet, innocent, happy boy, home for Sunday

[1] For those readers who have a failing for genealogic quests, I give a *résumé* of the Scott family history and

from Cowies [his school]. . . . Oh, God! how soon that day became clouded, and how dark its early close! Well, I suppose there is another world; if not, sure this is a blunder."

I have not spoken—because there seemed no need to speak—of the way in which those marvellous romantic fictions of Sir Walter came pouring from the pen, under a cloud of mystery, and of how the great burden of his business embarrassments—due largely to the recklessness of his jolly, easy-going friends, the Ballantynes—overwhelmed him at last. Indeed, in all I have ventured to say of Scott, I

succession of heirs to Abbotsford. The earlier items are from Scott's black-letter Bible.



have a feeling of its impertinence—as if I were telling you about your next-door neighbor: we all know that swift, brilliant, clouded career so well! But are those novels of his to live, and to delight coming generations, as they have the past? I do not know what the very latest critics may have to say; but, for my own part, I have strong belief that a century or two more will be sure to pass over before people of discernment, and large humanities, and of literary appreciation, will cease to read and to enjoy such stories as that of the *Talisman,* of *Kenilworth,* and of *Old Mortality.* I know 't is objected, and with much reason, that he wrote hastily, carelessly—that his stories are in fact (what Carlyle called them) extemporaneous stories. Yet, if they had been written under other conditions, could we have counted upon the heat and the glow which gives them illumination?

No, no—we do not go to him for word-craft; men of shorter imaginative range, and whose judgments wait on conventional rule, must guide us in such direction, and pose as our modellers of style. Goldsmith and Swift both may train in that company. But this master we are now considering wrote so swiftly and dashed so strongly into the current

of what he had to say, that he was indifferent to methods and words, except what went to engage the reader and keep him always cognizant of his purpose. But do you say that this is the best aim of all writing? Most surely it is wise for a writer to hold attention by what arts he can: failing of this, he fails of the best half of his intent; but if he gains this by simple means, by directness, by limpid language, and no more of it than the thought calls for, and by such rhythmic and beguiling use of it as tempts the reader to follow, he is a safer exemplar than one who by force of genius can accomplish his aims by loose expressions and redundance of words.

Next it is objected to these old favorites of ours, that they are not clever in the exhibit and explication of mental processes, and their analysis of motives is incomplete. Well, I suppose this to be true; and that he did, to a certain extent (as Carlyle used to allege grumblingly), work from the outside—in. He did live in times when men fell straightforwardly in love, without counting the palpitations of the heart; and when heroes struck honest blows without reckoning in advance upon the probable contractile power of their biceps muscles. Again, it is said that his history often lacks precision

and sureness of statement. Well, the dates are certainly sometimes twisted a few years out of their proper lines and seasons; but it is certain, also, that he does give the atmosphere and the coloring of historic periods in a completer and more satisfying way than many much carefuller chroniclers, and his portraits of great historic personages are by common consent—even of the critics—more full of the life of their subjects, and of a realistic exhibit of their controlling characteristics, than those of the historians proper. Nothing can be more sure than that Scott was not a man of great critical learning; nothing is more sure than that he was frequently at fault in minor details; but who will gainsay the fact that he was among the most charming and beneficent of story-tellers?

There may be households which will rule him out as old fashioned and stumbling, and wordy, and long; but I know of one, at least, where he will hold his place, as among the most delightful of visitors—and where on winter nights he will continue to bring with him (as he has brought so many times already) the royal figure of the Queen Elizabeth—shining in her jewels, or sulking in her coquetries; and Dandie Dinmont, with his pow-wow of Pepper

and Mustard; and King Jamie, with Steenie and jingling Geordie; and the patient, prudent, excellent Jeanie Deans; and the weak, old, amiable mistress of Tillietudlem; and Rebecca, and the Lady in the Green Mantle, and Dominie Sampson, and Peter Peebles, and Di Vernon, and all the rest!

GLINTS OF ROYALTY

THEY tell us Scott loved kings: why not? Romanticism was his nurse, from the days when he kicked up his baby heels under the shadows of Smailholme Tower, and Feudalism was his foster-parent. Always he loved banners and pageantry, and always the glitter and pomp which give their under or over tones to his pages of balladry. And if he stood in awe of titles and of rank, and felt the cockles of his heart warming in contact with these, 't was not by reason of a vulgar tuft-hunting spirit, nor was it due to the crass toadyism which seeks reflected benefit; but it grew, I think, out of sheer mental allegiance to feudal splendors and traditions.

Whether Scott ever personally encountered the old king, George III., may be doubtful; but I recall in some of his easy, family letters

(perhaps to his eldest boy Walter), most respectful and kindly allusions to the august master of the royal Windsor household—who ordered his home affairs so wisely—keeping "good hours;" while, amid the turbulences and unrest which belonged to the American and French Revolutions—succeeding each other in portentous sequence—he was waning toward that period of woful mental imbecility which beset him at last, and which clouded an earlier chapter[1] of our record. The Prince Regent—afterward George IV.—was always well disposed toward Scott; had read the *Minstrel,* and *Marmion,* with the greatest gratification (he did sometimes read), and told Lord Byron as much; even comparing the Scot with Homer—which was as near to classicism as the Prince often ran. But Byron, in his *English Bards,* etc., published in his earlier days, had made his little satiric dab at the *Minstrel*—finding a lively hope in its being *the Last!*

Murray, however, in the good Christian spirit which sometimes overtakes publishers, stanched these wounds, and brought the poets to bask together in the smiles of royalty. The first Baronetcy the Prince bestowed—after coming to Kingship—was that which made the

[1]Chapter IV. *Queen Anne and the Georges.*

author of Waverley Sir Walter; the poet had witnessed and reported the scenes at the Coronation of 1820 in London; and on the King's gala visit to Edinboro'—when all the heights about the gray old city boomed with welcoming cannon, and all the streets and all the water-ways were a-flutter with tartans and noisy with bag-pipes—it was Sir Walter who virtually marshalled the hosts, and gave chieftain-like greeting to the Prince. Scott's management of the whole stupendous paraphernalia—the banquets, the processions, the receptions, the decorations (of all which the glowing chronicles of the press are in evidence)—gave wonderful impressions of the masterful resources and dominating tact of the man; now clinking glasses (of Glenlivet) with the mellow King (counting sixty years in that day); now humoring into quietude the jealousies of Highland chieftains; again threading Canongate at nightfall and afoot—from end to end—to observe if all welcoming bannerols and legends are in place; again welcoming to his home, in the heat of ceremonial occupation, the white-haired and trembling poet Crabbe; anon, stealing away to his Castle Street chamber for a new chapter in the *Peveril of the Peak* (then upon the anvil), and in the heat, and fury, and

absorption of the whole gala business breaking out of line with a bowed head and aching heart, to follow his best friend, William Erskine (Lord Kinnedder),[1] out by Queensferry to his burial.

It was only eight years thereafter, when this poet manager of the great Scotch jubilee—who seemed good for the work of a score of years—sailed, by royal permission (an act redeeming and glorifying royalty) upon a Government ship—seeking shores and skies which would put new vigor (if it might be) into a constitution broken by toil, and into hopes that had been blighted by blow on blow of sorrow.

Never was a royal favor more worthily bespoken; never one more vainly bestowed. 'T was too late. No human eye—once so capable of seeing—ever opened for a first look so wearily upon the blue of the Mediterranean—upon the marvellous fringed shores of lower Italy—upon Rome, Florence, and the snowy Swiss portals of the Simplon.

Royalty (in person of William IV., then on the throne) asked kindly after the sick magician—who was established presently on a sick bed in London; while the cabmen on street cor-

[1] Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, chapter viii., pp. 126–27, vol. iii., Paris edition.

ners near by talked low of the "great mon" who lay there a-dying. A little show of recovery gave power to reach home—Abbotsford and Tweedside—once more. There was no hope; but it took time for the great strength in him to waste.

Withal there was a fine glint of royalty at the end. "Be virtuous, my dear," he said to Lockhart; "be a good man." And that utterance—the summing up of forty years of brilliant accomplishment, and of baffled ambitions—emphasized by the trembling voice of a dying man—will dwell longer in human memories, and more worthily, than the empty baronial pile we call Abbotsford, past which the scurrying waters of the Tweed ripple and murmur—as they did on the day Sir Walter was born, and on the day he was buried at Dryburgh.

CHAPTER III

OUR last chapter was opened by a rather full sketch of Professor Wilson, and a briefer one of Thomas Campbell—who though of higher repute as a poet, was a far less interesting man. We then entered upon what may have seemed a very inadequate account of the great author of Waverley—because I presumed upon the reader's full and ready knowledge; and because the Minstrel's grand stride over all the Scottish country that is worth the seeing, and over all that domain in English Lands and Letters, which he made his own, has been noted by scores of tourists, and by scores of admiring commentators. You may believe me in saying—that his story was not scrimped for lack of love; indeed, it would have been easy to riot in talk about the lively drum-beat of his poems, or the livelier and more engaging charms of his prose Romance—through two chapters or through ten. But we must get on; there is a long road before us yet.

A START IN LIFE

It was somewhere about the year 1798, that a sharp-faced, youngish Englishman—who had been curate of a small country parish down in Wiltshire—drove, upon a pleasant June day, on a coach-top, into the old city of Edinboro'. This clergyman had a young lad seated beside him, whom he was tutoring; and this tutoring business enabled the curate to take a respectable house in the city. And by reason of the respectable house, and his own pleasant humor and intelligence, he came after a year or two to know a great many of the better folk in Edinboro', and was invited to preach an occasional sermon at a small Episcopal chapel in his neighborhood. But all the good people he met did not prevent his being a-hungered after a young person whom he had left in the south of England. So he took a vacation presently and fetched her back, a bride, to the Scottish capital —having (as he said) thrown all his fortune in her lap. This fortune was of maternal inheritance, and consisted of six well-worn silver teaspoons. There was excellent society in Edinboro' in that day, among the ornaments of which was Henry Mackenzie,[1] a stately gentleman—a sort of dean of the literary coteries,

[1]Henry Mackenzie, b. 1745; d. 1831. *Man of Feeling,* 1771; *The Lounger,* 1785.

and the author of books which it is well to know by name—*The Man of Feeling* and *Julia de Roubigné*—written with great painstaking and most exalted sentiment, and—what we count now—much dreariness. Then there was a Rev. Archibald Alison—he too an Episcopal clergyman, though Scotch to the backbone—and the author of an ingenious, but not very pregnant book, still to be found in old-fashioned libraries, labelled *Alison on Taste*. Dugald Stewart was then active, and did on one or two occasions bring his honored presence to the little chapel to hear the preaching of the young English curate I spoke of. And this young curate, poor as he is and with a young wife, has an itch for getting into print; and does after a little time (the actual date being 1800) publish a booklet, which you will hardly find now, entitled *Six Sermons preached at Charlotte Chapel, Edinboro, by Rev. Sydney Smith.*[1] But it was not so much these sermons as his wit and brightness and great range of information, which brought him into easy intimacy with the most promising young men of the city. Walter Scott he may have encountered odd whiles, though the novelist was in those days bent on his hunt after Border Min-

[1]Rev. Sydney Smith, b. 1771; d. 1845. *Memoir* by Lady Holland.

strelsy, and would have been shy of the rampant liberalism ingrained with Smith.

But the curate did meet often, and most intimately, a certain prim, delicate, short-statured, black-eyed, smug, ambitious, precocious young advocate named Francis Jeffrey; and it was in a chamber of this latter—up three pair of stairs in Buccleugh Place—that Sydney Smith on a certain occasion, proposed to the host and two or three other friends there present, the establishment of a literary journal to be published quarterly; and out of that proposition grew straightway that famous *Edinburgh Review* which in its covers of buff and blue has thrived for over ninety years now—throwing its hot shot into all opposing camps of politics or of letters. I have designated two of the arch plotters, Sydney Smith and Jeffrey. Francis Horner[1] was another who was in at the start; he, too, a young Scotch lawyer, who went to London on the very year of the establishment of the journal, but writing for its early issues, well and abundantly. Most people know him now only by the beautiful statue of him by Chantrey, which stands in Westminster Abbey; it has a noble head, full of intellect

[1]Francis Horner, b. 1778; d. 1817. *Memoirs and Correspondence,* 1843.

—full of integrity. Sydney Smith said the Ten Commandments were writ all over his face. Yet the marble shows a tenderness of soul not common to those who, like him, had made a profession of politics, and entered upon a parliamentary career. But the career was short; he died in 1817—not yet forty—leaving a reputation that was spotless; had he lived, he would have come, without a doubt, to the leadership of liberal opinion in England. The mourning for him was something extraordinary in its reach, and its sincerity; a remarkable man—whose politics never up-rooted his affections, and whose study of the laws of trade did not spoil his temper, or make him abusive. His example, and his repeated advices, in connection with the early history of the *Review,* were always against the personalities and ugly satire which were strong features of it in the first years, and which had their source—very largely—in the influences and pertinacity of another member of the *Review* Syndicate; I mean Henry Brougham.

HENRY BROUGHAM

THIS was another young lawyer—of Scottish birth, but of Cumberland stock; ambitious like

Jeffrey and equally clever, though in a different line; he was ungainly and lank of limb; with a dogmatic and presuming manner, and a noticeably aggressive nose which became afterward the handle (and a very good handle it made) for those illustrative caricatures of Mr. Punch, which lasted for a generation. Brougham[1] was always a debater from his boy-days—and not a little of a bully and outlaw; precocious too—a capital Latinist—writing a paper on Optics at eighteen, which found publishment in the Philosophical Transactions; member of the Speculative Society where Jeffrey and Mackintosh, and Alison were wont to go, and where his disputatious spirit ran riot. He did n't love to agree with anybody; one of those men it would seem who hardly wished his dinner to agree with him.

Yet Brougham was one of the master spirits in this new enterprise, and became a great historic personage. His reputation was indeed rather political and forensic, than literary, and in his writings he inclined to scientific discussion. He had, however, a streak of purely lit-

[1]Henry Brougham (Lord Brougham and Vaux), b. 1778; d. 1868. *Collected Speeches,* 1838. *Historic Sketches, etc.,* 1839–43. Autobiography (edited by a brother), published in 1871.

erary ambition, and wrote a novel at one period of his life—after he had reached maturity—which he called a philosophic Romance.[1] Indeed this bantling was so swaddled in philosophic wrappings that it could have made no noise. Very few knew of it; fewer still ever read it. He said, "It had not enough of indecency and blasphemy in it to make it popular" (it was written when Byron was in high repute). But the few who did read it thought there were other reasons for its want of success.

He drifted quickly away from Edinboro', though long keeping up his connection with the *Review;* became famous as an advocate—notably in connection with Queen Caroline's trial; went into Parliament; was eventually Lord High Chancellor, and won a place in the Peerage. He was associated intimately, too, with great beneficent schemes—such as the suppression of the slave trade, the establishment of the London University, the founding of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Know-

[1] *Albert Lunel; or The Château of Languedoc.* Lowndes (Bohn) says—"3 vols. post 8vo, 1844. This novel was suppressed on the eve of publication, and it is said not above five copies of the original edition are extant." The *Maclise Portrait Gallery* speaks of an issue in 1872.

ledge, and the urgence of the great Reform measures of 1832. Yet in all these, he arrogated more than his share of the honor, wearying his associates by incessant bickering and scolding, picking flaws in everything not entirely his own; jealous, suspicious, conceited to the last degree; never generous in praise of one living beside him; an enormous worker, with sinews of iron, and on occasions (which are of record) speaking and wrangling in the House of Commons until two of the morning, and then going home—not to sleep—but to write a thirty-page article for the *Edinburgh Review*. Such men make a place for themselves, and keep it. He was an acrid debater, but a most thorough one—holding all aspects of a case in view; never getting muddled; ready with facts; ready with fallacies (if needed); ready for all and any interruptions; setting them on fire by the stress of his argumentation—like carbons in an electric circuit; ready with storms of irony and running into rough-edged sarcasm with singular ease and sharpest appetite.

On a May evening of 1845 the present writer had the pleasure of watching him for an hour or more in the House of Lords. He was lank, as I have said; awkward, nervous, restless; twisting the great seals at his watch-chain; in-

tent upon everything; now and then sniffing the air, like a terrier that has lost the scent; presenting a petition, in the course of the session, in favor of some Newfoundland clients who were anxious for more direct postal communication—who objected that their mails were sent in a roundabout way *via* Halifax. Whereupon Lord Stanley (afterward Earl Derby), then Secretary for the Colonies, rose in explanation, "Regretting that his Lordship had not communicated with the Colonial Office, which had considered the question raised; there was no communication by land; the harbor was often closed by ice; therefore present methods were followed," etc. All of which was set forth with most charming grace and suavity; but Lord Stanley was no sooner ended than the irascible Scotch peer, nettled, as would seem, by the very graciousness of the explanation, was upon his feet in an instant, with a sharp "M' Lards," that promised fun; and thereafter came a fusillade of keenest, ironical speech—thanking the honorable Secretary for "the vera impartant information, that as St. John's was upon an island, there could be no communication by land; and perhaps his learned *Lardship* supposes, with an acumen commensurate with his *great* geographic knowledge, that the sending of the mails by the way of Halifax will have

a tendency to *thaw* the ice in the Harbor of St. John's," and so on, for a ten minutes' storm of satiric and witty banter. And then—an awkward plunge backward into his seat—a new, nervous twirling of his watch-seals, a curious smile of self-approval, followed by a lapse into the old nervous unrest.

There was no serenity in Brougham—no repose—scarce any dignity. His petulance and angry sarcasm and frequent ill-nature made him a much hated man in his latter days, and involved him in abusive tirades, which people were slow to forgive.

FRANCIS JEFFREY

As for Mr. Jeffrey, his associate on the *Review,* and for many years its responsible editor, he was a very different man—of easy address, courteous, gentlemanly—quite a master of deportment. Yet it was he who ripped open with his critical knife Southey's *Thalaba* and the early poems of Wordsworth. But even his victims forgot his severities in his pleasantly magnetic presence and under the caressing suavities of his manner. He was brisk, *débonnaire,* cheery—a famous talker; not given to anecdotes or story-telling, but bubbling over with

engaging booklore and poetic hypotheses, and eager to put them into those beautiful shapes of language which came—as easily as water flows—to his pen or to his tongue. He said harsh things, not for love of harsh things; but because what provoked them grated on his tastes, or his sense of what was due to Belles Lettres. One did not—after conversing with him—recall great special aptness of remark or of epithet, so much as the charmingly even flow of apposite and illustrative language—void of all extravagances and of all wickednesses, too. Lord Cockburn says of his conversation:—

"The listeners' pleasure was enhanced by the personal littleness of the speaker. A large man [Jeffrey was very small] could scarcely have thrown off Jeffrey's conversational flowers without exposing himself to ridicule. But the liveliness of the deep thoughts and the flow of bright expressions that animated his talk, seemed so natural and appropriate to the figure that uttered them, that they were heard with something of the delight with which the slenderness of the trembling throat and the quivering of the wings make us enjoy the strength and clearness of the notes of a little bird."[1]

[1] *Life and Correspondence of Lord Jeffrey,* by Lord Cockburn, p. 283, vol. i., Harper's edition.

The first Mrs. Jeffrey dying early in life, he married for second wife a very charming American lady, Miss Wilkes;[1] having found time—notwithstanding his engrossment with the *Review*—for an American journey, at the end of which he carried home his bride. Some of his letters to his wife's kindred in America are very delightful—setting forth the new scenes to which the young wife had been transported. He knew just what to say and what not to say, to make his pictures perfect. The trees, the church-towers, the mists, the mosses on walls, the gray heather—all come into them, under a touch that is as light as a feather, and as sharp as a diamond.

His honors in his profession of advocate grew, and he came by courtesy to the title of Lord Jeffrey—(not to be confounded with that other murderous Lord Jeffreys, who was judicial hangman for James II.). He is in Parliament too; never an orator properly; but what he says, always clean cut, sensible, picturesque, flowing smoothly—but rather over the surface of things than into their depths. Accomplished

[1] A grandniece of the great marplot John Wilkes of George III.'s time, and a near connection (if I am not mistaken) of Captain Wilkes of the South Sea Expedition and of the Mason and Slidell seizure.

is the word to apply to him; accomplished largely and variously, and with all his accomplishments perfectly in hand.

Those two hundred papers which he wrote in the *Edinburgh Review* are of the widest range—charmingly and piquantly written. Yet they do not hold place among great and popular essays; not with Macaulay, or Mackintosh, or Carlyle, or even Hazlitt. He was French in his literary aptitudes and qualities; never heavy; touching things, as we have said, with a feather's point, yet touching them none the less surely.

Could he have written a book to live? His friends all thought it, and urged him thereto. He thought not. There would be great toil, he said, and mortification at the end; so he lies buried, where we leave him, under a great tumulus of most happy *Review* writing.

SYDNEY SMITH

I RETURN now to the clever English curate who was the first to propose the establishment of that great Northern *Review,* out of which Lord Jeffrey grew. Smith had written very much and well, and had cracked his jokes in a way to be heard by all the good peo-

ple of Edinboro'. But he was poor, and his wife poor; he had his fortune to make; and plainly was not making it there, tutoring his one pupil. So, in 1804, he struck out for London, to carve his way to fortune. He knew few there; but his clever papers in the *Review* gave him introduction to Whig circles, and a social plant, which he never forfeited. Lord and Lady Holland greatly befriended him; and he early came to a place at the hospitable board of that famous Holland House—of whose green quietudes we have had glimpses, in connection with Addison, and in connection with Charles Fox—and whose mistress in the days we are now upon, showed immense liking for the brilliant and witty parson.

All this while, the Rev. Sydney was seeking preaching chances; but was eyed doubtfully by those who had pulpits in their gift. He was too independent—too witty—too radical—too hateful of religious conventionalisms—too *Edinburgh Reviewish*. Neither was he a great orator; rather scornful of explosive clap-trap or of noisy pulpit rhetoric; yet he had a resonant voice—earnest in every note and trill; often sparkling to his points in piquant, conversational way, but wanting quick-witted ones for their reception and comprehension. He

lacked too, in a measure—what is another great resource for a preacher—the unction which comes of deep, sustained, devotional feeling, and a conviction of the unmatchable importance and efficacy of sacerdotal influences. I think there was no time in his life when he would not rather beguile a wayward soul by giving him a good, bright witticism to digest than by exhibit of the terrors of the Law. His Gospel—by preference—was an intellectual gospel; yet not one that reposed on creeds and formulas. His heart was large, and his tolerance full. He was a proud Churchman indeed, and loved to score dissenters; but delighted in the crack of his witticisms, more than he mourned over their apostasy. Among the "evening meetings" that he knew very much of, and specially relished, were those at his own little homestead, with closed blinds, and a few friends, and hot-water, and—lemons!

I do not at all mean to imply that he had habits of dissipation, or was ever guilty of vulgar excesses. Of all such he had a wholesome horror; but along with it, he had a strong and abiding fondness for what he counted the good things of life, and the bright things, and the play of wit, and the encounter of scholarly weapons.

One beautiful priestly quality, however, always shone in him: that was his kindliness for the poor and feeble—his sympathy with them—his working for their benefit; and though he trusted little in appeals to the mere emotional nature, yet in his charity sermons he drew such vivid pictures of the suffering poor folk who had come under his eye, as to put half his auditors in tears.

His preaching in London at this early period was for the most part at an out-of-the-way chapel, in connection with a Foundling Hospital; but he gave a series of Philosophic Lectures at the Royal Institution—never reckoned by himself with his good work—which were besieged by people who came to enjoy his witty sayings. In a few years, however, he secured a valuable church gift in Yorkshire, where he built a rectory—the ugliest and "honest-est house" in the county—and entertained London and Scottish friends there, and grew to enjoy—much as he could—the trees, flowers, and lawns which he planted, and with which he coquetted, though only in a half-hearted way. His supreme love was for cities and crowds; he counting the country at its best only a kind of "healthy grave"; flowers, turf, birds are very well in their way, he says, but not worth an

hour of the rational conversation only to be had where a million are gathered in one spot.[1]

And he does at last come to the million—getting, after his Whig friends came into power, and after the Reform revolution was over, the royal appointment to a canonry in connection with St. Paul's Cathedral.[2]

He also has the gift of a new country "living" in Somersetshire, where he passes his later summer in another delightfully equipped home; and between these two church holdings, and certain legacies conveniently falling due, he has a large income at command, and enjoys it, and makes the poor of his parishes enjoy it too.

He has taken a lusty hand in that passage of the Reform bill (1832), and while its success seemed still to be threatened by the sullen opposition of the House of Lords, he made that famous witty comparison in which he likened the popular interest in Reform to a great storm and tide which had set in from the Atlantic, and the opposition of the Lords, to the efforts

[1] Cited from recollection; but very close to his own utterance, in a letter to a friend.

[2] This was arranged through Lord Grey, in exchange for a place in Bristol Cathedral, which had been bestowed by his Tory friend Lyndhurst. To the same friend he was indebted for his living at Combe Fleurey.

of Dame Partington, who lived upon the beach, and—

"who was seen at the door of her house with mops and pattens, trundling her mop, squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused. Mrs. Partington's spirit was up. But I need not tell you the contest was unequal. The Atlantic Ocean beat Mrs. Partington. She was excellent at a slop or a puddle, but she should not have meddled with a tempest."

And this happy and droll comparison was met with a great roar of laughter and of applause that ran all over England. The same tactics of witty ridicule belonged also to his attacks upon Tractarianism and Puseyism, which made stir in his latter days. Indeed, his bump of veneration was very small; and his drollery creeps into his letters as into his speech. He writes of a visit to Edinboro':

"My old friends were glad to see me; some were turned Methodists, some had lost their teeth, some had grown very fat, some were dying, and, alas! many were dead. But the world is a coarse enough place; so I talked away, comforted some, praised others, kissed some old ladies, and passed a very riotous week."[1]

[1] *Life and Times of Rev. Sydney Smith,* by Stuart J. Reid, p. 226, 1885.

He writes to Moore, the poet:

"DEAR MOORE: I have a breakfast of philosophers at ten, punctually, to-morrow—'muffins and metaphysics, crumpets and contradiction.' Will you come?"

When Mrs. Smith is ailing at her new home in Somersetshire he says:

"Mrs. S—— has eight distinct illnesses, and I have nine. We take something every hour, and pass the mixture between us."

One part of his suffering comes of hay fever, as to which he says:

"Light, dust, contradiction—the sight of a dissenter—anything sets me sneezing; and if I begin sneezing at twelve, I don't leave off till two, and am heard distinctly in Taunton (when the wind sets that way), a distance of six miles."

This does not show quite so large a reserve and continence of speech as we naturally look for in the clerical profession; but this, and other such do, I think, set the Rev. Sydney Smith before us, with his witty proclivities, and his unreserve, and his spirit of frolic, as no citations from his moral and intellectual philosophy could ever do. And I easily figure to myself this portly, well-preserved gentleman

of St. Paul's, fighting the weaknesses of the gout with a gold-headed cane, and picking his way of an afternoon along the pavements of Piccadilly, with eye as bright as a bird's, and beak as sharp as a bird's—regaling himself with the thought of the dinner for which he is booked, and of the brilliant talkers he is to encounter, with the old parry and thrust, at Rogers's rooms, or under the noble ceiling of Holland House.

A HIGHLANDER

ANOTHER writer—whose sympathies from the beginning were with the Liberalism of the *Edinburgh Review* (though not a contributor till some years after its establishment) was Sir James Mackintosh.[1] A Highlander by birth—he was at Aberdeen University—afterwards in Edinboro', where he studied medicine, and getting his Doctorate, set up in London—eking out a support, which his medical practice did not bring, by writing for the papers.

This was at the date when the recent French Revolution and its issues were at the top of all men's thoughts; and when Burke had just

[1] James Mackintosh, b. 1765; d. 1832; *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* (reply to Burke), 1791; *Memoirs,* by his son, 1835.

set up his glittering bulwark of eloquence and of sentiment in his famous "Reflections"; and our young Doctor (Mackintosh)—full of a bumptious Whiggism, undertook a reply to the great statesman—a reply so shrewd, so well-seasoned, so sound—that it brought to the young Scotchman (scarce twenty-five in those days) a fame he never outlived. It secured him the acquaintance of Fox and Sheridan, and the friendship of Burke, who in his latter days invited the young pamphleteer, who had so strongly, yet so respectfully, antagonized his views, to pass a Christmas with him at his home at Beaconsfield. Of course, such a success broke up the doctoring business, and launched Mackintosh upon a new career. He devoted himself to politics; was some time an accredited lecturer upon the law of nations; was knighted presently and sent to Bombay on civil service. His friends hoped he might find financial equipment there, but this hope was vain; red-tape was an abomination to him always; cash-book and ledger represented unknown quantities; he knew no difference between a shilling and a pound, till he came to spend them. He was in straits all his life.

His friendship for Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, and Brougham was maintained by correspond-

ence, and on his return from India he became an occasional contributor to the great Scotch *Review* on various subjects.

His range of acquirements was most wide—too wide and too unceasing for the persistency which goes with great single achievements. His histories are fragments. His speeches are misplaced treatises; his treatises are epitomes of didactic systems. When we weigh his known worth, his keenness of intellect, his sound judgment, his wealth of language, his love for thoroughness—which led him to remotest sources of information—his amazing power in colloquial discourse, we are astonished at the little store of good things he has left. There was a lack in him, indeed, of the salient and electrical wit of Sydney Smith; a lack of the easy and graceful volubility of Jeffrey; lack of the abounding and illuminating rhetoric of Macaulay; but a greater lack was of that dogged, persistent working habit which gave to Brougham his triumphs.

Yet Mackintosh was always plotting great literary designs; but his fastidious taste, and his critical hunger for all certainties, kept him forever in the search of new material and appliances. He was dilatory to the last degree; his caution always multiplied delays; no gen-

eral was ever so watchful of his commissariat —none ever so unready for a "Forward, march!" Among his forecasts was that of a great history of England. Madame de Staël urged her friend to take possession of her villa on Lake Geneva and, like Gibbon, write his way there to a great fame. He did for awhile set himself resolutely to a beginning at the country home of Weedon Lodge in Buckinghamshire—accumulated piles of fortifying MSS. and private records; but for outcome we have only that clumsy torso which outlines the Revolution of 1688.[1]

His plans wanted a hundred working years, instead of the thirty which are only allotted to men. What Jeffrey left behind him marks, I think, the full limit of his powers; the same is true of Brougham, and true probably of Macaulay; and I think no tension and no incentive would have wrought upon Sydney Smith to work greater and brighter things than he did accomplish. A bishopric would only have set his gibes into coruscation at greater tables, and perhaps given larger system to his charities. But Mackintosh never worked up to the full.

[1] *History of the Revolution in England in 1688, Comprising a View of the Reign of James II. from his Accession to the Enterprise* [sic] *of the Prince of Orange*, London, 1834.

level of his best power and large learning, except in moments of conversational exaltation.

REST AT CANNES

BEFORE closing our chapter we take one more swift glimpse at that arch-plotter for Whiggism—in the early days of the *Edinburgh Review*—whom we left fidgetting in the House of Lords, on a May evening of 1845. He had a longer life by far than most of those who conspired for the maintenance of the great blue and buff forerunner of British critical journals. He was only twenty-three when he put his shoulder to the quarterly revolutions of the *Edinburgh*—youngest of all the immediate founders;[1] and he outlived them all and outvoiced them all in the hurly-burly of the world.

He survived Macaulay too—an early contributor of whom we shall have more to say—and though he was past eighty at the death of

[1] Smith, Jeffrey, Brown, Horner, and Brougham. Stephens: *Hours in a Library*, iii., 140.

The "Brown" alluded to as one of the founders, was Dr. Thomas Brown, a distinguished physician and psychologist (b. 1778; d. 1820), who after issue of third number of the *Review*, had differences with Jeffrey (virtual editor) which led him to withdraw his support. *Life*, by Welsh, p. 79 *et seq.*

the historian, he was alert still, and his brain vagrantly active; but the days of his early glory and fame—when the young blusterer bolstered up Reform, and slew the giants of musty privilege and sent "the schoolmaster abroad," and antagonized slavery, were gone;[1] so, too, were those palmy times when he made the courts at Westminster ring with his championship of that poor Queen (who, whatever her demerits—and they were many—was certainly abominably maltreated by a husband far worse than she); times when the populace who espoused her cause shouted bravos to Harry Brougham—times when he was the best known and most admired man in England; all these,

[1] I cannot forbear giving—though only in a note—one burst of his fervid oratory, when his powers were at their best:

"It was the boast of Augustus—it formed part of the glare in which the perfidies of his earlier years were lost—that he found Rome of brick, and left it of marble—a praise not unworthy of a great prince, and to which the present reign [George IV.] has its claim also. But how much nobler will be our Sovereign's boast when he shall have it to say, that he found law dear and left it cheap; found it a sealed book, and left it a living letter; found it the patrimony of the rich, left it the inheritance of the poor; found it the two-edged sword of craft and oppression, left it the staff of honesty and the shield of innocence." Speech, on *Present State of the Law,* February 7, 1828.

and his chancellorship, and his wordy triumphs in the House of Lords, were far behind him, and the inevitable loss of place and power fretted him grievously. He quarrelled with old coadjutors; in Parliament he shifted from bench to bench; in the weakness of age, he truckled to power; he exasperated his friends, and for years together—his scoldings, his tergiversations, and his plaid trousers made a mine of mockery for Mr. Punch. As early as 1835–40, Lord Brougham had purchased an estate in the south of France, in a beautiful nook of that mountain shore which sweeps eastward from the neighborhood of Marseilles—along the Mediterranean, and which so many travellers now know by the delights of the Cornice Road and Monaco, and Mentone, and San Remo. The little fishing village where years ago Lord Brougham set up his Villa of Louise Eléonore (after a darling and lost child) is now a suburb of the fashionable resort of Cannes. At his home there, amongst the olives, the oleanders and the orange-trees, the disappointed and petulant ex-chancellor passed most of the later years of his life.

Friends dropping in upon him—much doubting of their reception—found him as the humors changed, peevish with strong regrets and

recriminations, or placid under the weight of his years, and perhaps narcotized by the marvellous beauty of the scenes around him.

He was over ninety at his death in 1868. To the very last, a man not to be reckoned on: some days as calm as the sea that rippled under his window; other days full of his old unrest and petulancies. There are such men in all times and in all societies—sagacious, fussy, vain, indefatigable, immensely serviceable, cantankerous; we *can't* get on without them; we are forever wishing that we could.

In our next chapter we shall come upon a critic, who was a famous editor—adroit, strong, waspish, bookish, and ignoble. We shall encounter a king, too—of whom we have thus far only had glimpses—who was jolly—excellently limbed and conditioned physically—a man "of infinite jest," too, and yet as arrant a dastard—by all old-fashioned moral measures of character—as Falstaff himself. Again we shall follow traces of a great poet—but never a favorite one—who has left markings of his career, strong and deep; a man who had a Greek's delight in things of beauty, and a Greek's subtlety of touch; but one can fancy a faun's ears showing their tips upon his massive

head, and (without fancy) grow conscious of a heathenism clouding his great culture. Other two poets of lighter mould we shall meet;—more gracious, lighter pinioned—prettily flitting—iridescent—grace and sparkle in their utterances, but leaving no strong markings "upon the sands of time."

CHAPTER IV

We have wandered much in our two last chapters beyond what may be reckoned strictly English lands, into that pleasant region lying between the Tweed and the Firth of Forth; and it was north of the heights of Lammermuir and of the Pentland Hills, and in that delightful old city which is dominated by the lesser heights of the Salisbury crags, the Castle Rock, and Calton Hill, that we found the builders of that great *Review,* which in its livery of buff and blue still carries its original name. I traced the several careers of Sydney Smith, Lord Brougham, and Judge Jeffrey; the first of these, from a humble village curacy, coming to be one of the most respected literary men of England, and an important official of St. Paul's Cathedral; if his wit had been less lively he might have risen to a bishopric. Brougham was, first, essayist, then advocate, then Parliamentary orator, then Reformer, then Lord High Chancellor—purging the courts of much legal trumpery—

always a scold and quarreller, and gaining in the first year of William IV. his barony of Brougham and Vaux: hence the little squib of verse, which will help to keep his exact title in mind:

"Why is Lord Brougham like a sweeping man
That close by the pavement walks?
Because when he 's done all the sweep that he can
He takes up his *Broom* and *Valks!*"

As for Jeffrey, he became by his resolute industry and his literary graces and aptitudes one of the most admired and honored critics of Great Britain.

GIFFORD AND HIS QUARTERLY

Our start-point to-day is on the Thames—in that devouring city of London, which very early in the century was laying its tentacles of growth on all the greenness that lay between Blackwall and Bayswater, and which—athwart the Thames shores—strode blightingly from Clapham to Hackney.

It was, I believe, in the year 1809 that Mr. John Murray, the great publisher of London—stirred, perhaps, by some incentive talk of Wal-

ter Scott, or of other good Tory penmen, and emulous of the success which had attended Jeffrey's *Review* in the north, established a rival one—called simply *The Quarterly*—intended to represent the Tory interests as unflinchingly and aggressively as the *Edinburgh* had done Whig interests. The first editor was a William Gifford[1] (a name worth remembering among those of the British critics), who was born in Devonshire. He was the son of a dissolute house-painter, and went to sea in his young days, but was afterwards apprenticed to a shoemaker. Some piquant rhymes he made in those days attracting the attention of benevolent gentlemen, he was put in the way of schooling, and at Oxford, where he studied. It was while there he meditated, and perhaps executed, some of those clever translations from Persius and Juvenal, which he published somewhat later. He edited Ben Jonson's works in

[1]William Gifford, b. 1757; d. 1826. I give the birth-date named by himself in his autobiography, though the new *National Dictionary of Biography* gives date of 1756. Gifford—though not always the best authority—ought to have known the year when he was born.

Ed. *Quarterly Review*, 1809–1824; *Juvenal*, 1802; *Ben Jonson*, 1816.

Some interesting matter concerning the early life of Gifford may be found in Memoirs of *John Murray*, vol. i, pp. 127 *et seq.*

a clumsy and disputatious way, and in some of his earlier, crude, satirical rhymes (*Baviad*) paid his respects to Madame Thrale in this fashion:

"See Thrale's gay widow with a satchel roam,
And bring in pomp laborious nothings home."

And again he pounces upon the biographer of Dr. Johnson thus-wise:

"Boswell, aping with preposterous pride,
Johnson's worst frailties, rolls from side to side,
His heavy head from hour to hour erects,
Affects the fool, and is what he affects."

These lines afford a very good measure of his poetic grace and aptitude; but they give only a remote idea of his wonderful capacity for abusing people who did not think as he thought. He had a genius in this direction, which could not have discredited an editorial room in New York—or elsewhere. Walter Scott—a warm political friend—speaks of him as "a little man, dumpled up together, and so ill-made as to seem almost deformed;" and I think that kindly gentleman was disposed to attribute much of the critic's rancor to his invalidism; but if we measure his printed bile in this way, there must be credited him not only

his usual rheumatic twinges, but a pretty constant dyspepsia, if not a chronic neuralgia. Of a certainty he was a most malignant type of British party critics; and it is curious how the savors of its first bitterness do still linger about the pages of the *Quarterly Review.*

John Wilson Croker[1] will be best known to our readers as the editor of that edition of Boswell's "Johnson," to which I have alluded. Within the last ten years, however, his memoirs and correspondence, in two bulky volumes, have excited a certain languid interest, and given entertainment to those who are curious in respect to the political wire-pullings of the early part of this century in London. He was an ardent co-worker with Gifford in the early history of the *Quarterly Review.* He loved a lord every whit as well as Gifford, and by dint of a gentlemanly manner and gentlemanly associations was not limited to the "back-stairs way" of Mr. Gifford in courting those in authority. His correspondence with dukes and earls—to all of whom he is a "dear Croker"—abound; and his account of interviews with the Prince Regent, and of dinners

[1]John Wilson Croker, b. 1780; d. 1857, wrote voluminously for the *Quarterly Review; Life of Johnson* (ed.), 1831; his *Memoirs* and *Correspondence,* 1885.

at the Pavilion in Brighton, are quite Boswellian in their particularity and in their atmosphere of worship. There is also long account in the book to which I have called attention, of a private discourse by George IV., of which Mr. Croker was sole auditor; and it is hard to determine whether Croker is more elated by having the discourse to record, or Mr. Jennings by having such a record to edit.

A PRINCE REGENT

THIS royal mention brings us once more, for a little space, to our background of kings. Of the old monarch, George III., we have had frequent and full glimpses. We wish to know something now of that new prince (whom we saw in our Scott chapter), but who in 1810, when his father's faculties failed altogether, became Regent; and we wish to learn what qualities are in him and under what training they developed.

The old father had a substructure of good, hard sense that showed itself through all his obstinacies; for instance, when Dr. Markham, who was appointed tutor to his two oldest sons —Prince of Wales and Duke of York—asked how he should treat them, the old king said:

"Treat them? Why, to be sure, as you would any gentleman's sons! If they need the birch, give the birch, as you would have done at Westminster." But when they had advanced a bit, and a certain Dr. Arnold (a later tutor) undertook the same regimen, the two princes put their forces together and gave the doctor such a drubbing that he never tried birch again. But it was always a very close life the princes led in their young days; the old king was very rigorous in respect of hours and being out at night. By reason of which George IV. looked sharply after his opportunities, when they did come, and made up for that early cloisterhood by a large laxity of regimen.[1] Indeed, he opened upon a very glittering career of dissipations—the old father groaning and grumbling and squabbling against it vainly.

It was somewhere about 1788 or 1789, just when the French Revolution was beginning to throw its bloody foam over the tops of the Bastille, that temporary insanity in the old King George III. did for a very brief space bring the Prince into consequence as Regent. Of the happening of this, and of the gloom in the pal-

[1] Very much piquant talk about George IV. and his friends may be found in the *Journal of Mary Frampion from 1779 until 1846.* London: Sampson Low & Co., 1885.

ace, there is story in the diary of Madame D'Arblay,[1] who was herself in attendance upon the Queen. If, indeed, George III. had stayed mad from that date, and the Prince—then in his fullest vigor, and a great friend of Fox and other Liberal leaders—had come to the full and uninterrupted responsibility of the Regency, his career might have been very different. But the old king rallied, and for twenty years thereafter put his obstinacies and Tory caution in the way of the Prince, who, with no political royalties to engage him, and no important official duties (though he tried hard to secure military command), ran riot in the old way. He lavishes money on Carlton House; builds a palace for Mrs. Fitzherbert; coquets with Lady Jersey; affects the fine gentleman. No man in London was prouder of his walk, his cane, his club nonchalance, his taste in meats, his knowledge of wines, ragoûts, indelicate songs, and arts of the toilette. Withal, he is well-made, tall, of most graceful address, a capital story-teller, too; an indefatigable diner-out; a very fashion-plate in dress—corsetted, puffed out in the chest like a pouter pigeon; all the while running vigorously and scandalously in debt, while the father is setting himself squarely

[1] *Queen Anne & the Georges,* pp. 155–56.

against any further parliamentary grant in his favor. There are, however—or will be—relentings in the old King's mind, if "Wales" will promise to settle down in life and marry his cousin, Caroline of Brunswick—if, indeed, he be not already married to Mrs. Fitzherbert, which some avow and some deny. It does not appear that the Prince is very positive in his declarations on this point—yes or no. So he filially yields and accedes to a marriage, which by the conditions of the bargain is to bring him £70,000 to pay his debts withal. She is twenty-seven—a good-looking, spirited Brunswicker woman, who sets herself to speaking English—nips in the bud some love-passages she has at home, and comes over to conquer the Prince's affections—which she finds it a very hard thing to do. He is polite, however; is agreeably disposed to the marriage scheme, which finds exploitation with a great flourish of trumpets in the Chapel Royal of St. James. The old King is delighted with his niece; the old Queen is a little cool, knowing that the Prince does not care a penny for the bride, and believing that she ought to have found that out.

She does find it out, however, in good time; and finds out about Mrs. Fitzherbert and her

fine house; and does give her Prince some very severe curtain lectures—beginning early in that branch of wifely duty. The Prince takes it in dudgeon; and the dudgeon grows bigger and bigger on both sides (as such things will); finally, a year or more later—after the birth of her daughter, the Princess Charlotte—proposals for separation are passed between them (with a great flourish of diplomacy and golden sticks), and accepted with exceeding cordiality on both sides.

Thereafter, the Prince becomes again a man about town—very much about town indeed. Everybody in London knows his great bulk, his fine waistcoats, his horses, his hats and his wonderful bows, which are made with a grace that seems in itself to confer knighthood. For very many years of domestic life,—what little there was of it,—passed without weighty distractions. His Regency when established (1811) was held through a very important period of British history; those great waves of Continental war which ended in Waterloo belonged to it; so did the American War of 1812; so did grave disaffections and discontent at home. He did not quarrel with his cabinets, or impede their action; he learned how to yield, and how to conciliate. Were it

only for this, 't is hardly fair to count him a mere posture-master and a dandy.

He loved, too, and always respected his old mother, the Queen of George III.;[1] loved too, —in a way—and more than any other creature in the world except himself, that darling daughter of his, the Princess Charlotte, who at seventeen became the bride of Leopold, afterward King of Belgium,—she surviving the marriage only a year. Her memory is kept alive by the gorgeous marble cenotaph you will see in St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

It was only when George IV. actually ascended the throne in 1820 that his separated wife put in a disturbing appearance again; she had been living very independently for some years on the Continent; and it occurred to her—now that George was actually King—that it would be a good thing, and not impinge on the old domestic frigidities, to share in some of the drawing-room splendors and royalties of the British capital. To George IV. it seemed very awkward; so it did to his cabinet. Hence came about those measures for a divorce, and the famous trial of Queen Caroline, in which Brougham won oratorical fame by his brilliant plea for the Queen. This was

[1] Queen Charlotte, d. 1818.

so far successful as to make the ministerial divorce scheme a failure; but the poor Queen came out of the trial very much bedraggled; whether her Continental life had indeed its criminalities or not, we shall never positively know. Surely no poor creature was ever more sinned against than she, in being wheedled into a match with such an unregenerate partaker in all deviltries as George IV. But she was not of the order of women out of which are made martyrs for conscience's sake. It was in the year 1821 that death came to her relief, and her shroud at last whitened a memory that had stains.

A SCHOLAR AND POET

We freshen the air now with quite another presence. Yet I am to speak of a man whose life was full of tumult, and whose work was full of learning and power—sometimes touched with infinite delicacy.

He was born four years after Sydney Smith and Walter Scott—both of whom he survived many years; indeed he lacked only eleven years of completing a century when he died in Florence, where most of his active—or rather inactive—life was passed. I allude to the poet

and essayist, Walter Savage Landor.[1] He is not what is called a favorite author; he never was; he never will be. In fact, he had such scorn of popular applause, that if it had ever happened to him in moments of dalliance with the Muses, and of frolic with rhythmic language, to set such music afloat as the world would have repeated and loved to repeat, I think he would have torn the music out in disdain for the approval of a multitude. Hear what he says, in one of his later poetic utterances:—

"Never was I impatient to receive
What *any* man could give me. When a friend
Gave me my due, I took it, and no more,
Serenely glad, because that friend was pleased.
I seek not many; many seek not me.
If there are few now seated at my board,
I pull no children's hair because they munch
Gilt gingerbread, the figured and the sweet,
Or wallow in the innocence of whey;
Give *me* wild boar, the buck's broad haunch give
me,
And wine that time has mellowed, even as time
Mellows the warrior hermit in his cell."[2]

[1] W. S. Landor, b. 1775; d. 1864. *Gebir*, 1798; *Imaginary Conversations*, 1824; Foster's *Life*, 1869.
[2] P. 465. *Last Fruit from an Old Tree.*

Such verse does not invite a large following, nor did the man. Pugnacious, tyrannic, loud-mouthed, setting the world's and the Church's rubrics at defiance; yet weighing language to the last jot and tittle of its significance, and—odd-whiles—putting little tendernesses of thought and far-reaching poetic aspirations into such cinctures of polished verse—so jewelled, so compact, so classic, so fine—that their music will last and be admired as long, I think, as English speech lasts. Apart from all this man wrote, there is a strange, half-tragic interest in his life, which will warrant me in telling you more of him than I have told of many whose books are more prized by you.

He was the son of a Dr. Landor, of Warwick, in middle England, who by reason of two adroit marriages was a man of fortune, and so secured eventually a very full purse to the poet, who if he had depended only on the sale of his literary wares, would have starved. Language was always young Landor's hobby; and he came, by dint of good schooling, to such dexterity in the use of Latin, as to write in verse or prose with nearly the same ease as English. He loved out-of-door pursuits in boyhood and all his life; was greatly accomplished, his biographer says, in fishing—espe-

cially with a cast-net; and of the prey that sometimes came into such net there is this frolicsome record:

"In youth 't was there I used to scare
A whirring bird, or scampering hare,
And leave my book within a nook
Where alders lean above the brook,
To walk beyond the third mill-pond
And meet a maiden fair and fond
Expecting me beneath a tree
Of shade for two, but not for three.
Ah, my old Yew, far out of view,
Why must I bid you both adieu?"[1]

At Oxford he was a marked man for his cleverness and for his audacities; these last brought him to grief there, and going home upon his rustication, he quarrelled with his father. Thereafter we find him in London, where he publishes his first little booklet of poems (1795); only twenty then; counted a fierce radical; detesting old George III. with his whole heart; admiring the rebel George Washington and declaring it; loving the French, too, with their liberty and fraternity song, until it was silenced by the cannonading of Napoleon; thenceforward, he counts that

[1] Colvin cites this from unpublished verses.

people a nation of "monkeys, fit only to be chained."

But Landor never loved London. We find him presently wandering by the shores of Wales, and among its mountains. Doubtless he takes his cast-net with him; the names of Ianthé and Ioné decorate occasional verses; a certain Rose Aylmer he encounters, too, who loans him a book (by Clara Reeve), from a sketch in which he takes hint for his wild, weird poem of *Gebir,* his first long poem—known to very few—perhaps not worth the knowing. It is blind in its drift; war and pomp and passion in it—ending with a poisoned cup; and contrasting with these, such rural beatitudes as may be conjured under Afric skies, with tender love-breezes, ending in other beatitudes in coral palaces beneath the sea. This, at any rate, is the phantasmic outline which a reading leaves upon my own memory. Perhaps another reader may be happier.

That shadowy Rose Aylmer, through whom the suggestion for the poem came, was the real daughter of Lord Aylmer, of the near Welsh country; what Landor's intimacy with her may have been, in its promise or its reach, we do not know; but we do know that when she died, somewhat later and in a far country, the poet

gave her name embalmment in those wonderful little verses, which poor Charles Lamb, it is said, in his later days, would repeat over and over and over, never tiring of the melody and the pathos. Here they are:—

"Ah, what avails the sceptred race,
Ah, what the form divine!
What—every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee!"

Meantime, growing into a tempestuous love for the wild Welsh country, he bargains for a great estate, far up in a valley which opens down upon the larger valley in which lies Abergavenny; and being rich now by reason of his father's death, parts with his beautiful ancestral properties in the Warwickshire region, lavishing a large portion of the sales-money upon the savagery of the new estate in Wales. He plants, he builds, he plays the monarch in those solitudes. He marries, too, while this mountain passion is on him, a young girl of French or Swiss extraction—led like a lamb into the lion's grasp. But the first Welsh quarrel of

this poet-monarch—who was severely classic, and who fed himself all his life through on the thunder-bolts of Jupiter—was with his neighbors; next with his workmen; then with his tenants; then the magistrates; last with everybody; and in a passion of disgust, he throws down his walls, turns astray his cattle, lets loose his mountain tarns, and leaving behind him the weltering wreck of his half-built home, goes over with his wife to Jersey, off the coast of Normandy. There she, poor, tired, frighted, worried bird—maybe with a little of the falcon in her—would stay; *he* would not. So he dashes on incontinently—deserting her, and planting himself in mid-France at the old city of Tours, where he devotes himself to study.

This first family tiff, however, gets its healing, and—his wife joining him—they go to Como, where Southey (1817) paid them a visit; this poet had been one of the first and few admirers of *Gebir,* which fact softened the way to very much of mutual and somewhat overstrained praises between these two.[1] From Como Landor went to Pisa—afterward to

[1] In his *Last Fruits from an Old Tree,* p. 334, Moxon Edition, Landor writes: "Southey could grasp great subjects and master them; Coleridge never attempted them; Wordsworth attempted it and failed." This is strongly *ex parte!*

Florence, his home thenceforth for very many years; first in the town proper and then in a villa at Fiesole from which is seen that wondrous view—none can forget who have beheld it—of the valley, which seems a plain—of the nestling city, with its great Brunelleschi dome, its arrow-straight belfry of Giotto, its quaint tower of the Palazzo Vecchio, its cypress sentinels on the Boboli heights, its River Arno shining and winding, and stealing away seaward from the amphitheatre of hills—on whose slopes are dotted white convents, sleeping in the sun, and villas peeping out from their cloakings of verdure, and the gray shimmer of olive orchards.

LANDOR IN ITALY.

It was in Florence that Landor wrote the greater part of those *Imaginary Conversations* which have given him his chief fame; but which, very possibly, may be outlived in the popular mind by the wonderful finish and the Saxon force which belong to many of his verselets.

The conversations are just what their name implies—the talk of the learned, or distinguished men, on such topics as they were sup-

posed to be most familiar with; all *imagined,* and set forth by the brain of Landor, who took a strange delight in thus playing with the souls of other men and making them the puppets of his will. One meets in his pages Roger Ascham and Lady Jane Grey, Milton and Andrew Marvel, and Achilles and Helena; then we are transported from Mount Ida to the scene of a homely colloquy between Washington and Franklin—about monarchy and Republicanism. Again we have Leofric and Godiva telling their old story with a touching dramatic interest; and can listen—if we will—to long and dullish dispute between Dr. Johnson and Horne Tooke, about Language and its Laws; from this—in which Landor was always much interested—we slip to the Philo-Russianism of a talk between Peter the Great and Alexis. There are seven great volumes of it all—which must belong to all considerable libraries, private or other, and which are apt to keep very fresh and uncut. Of course there is no logical continuity—no full exposition of a creed, or a faith, or a philosophy. It is a great, wide, eloquent, homely jumble; one bounces from rock to rock, or from puddle to puddle (for there are puddles) at the will of this great giant driver of the chariot of imag-

Walter Savage Landor
From a drawing by D'Orsay

Mail

inary talk.[1] There are beauties of expression that fascinate one; there are sentences so big with meaning as to bring you to sudden pause; there are wearisome chapters about the balance of French verselets, in which he sets up the poor Abbé Delille on rhetorical stilts—only to pelt him down; there are page-long blotches of crude humor, and irrelevant muddy tales, that you wish were out. As sample of his manner, I give one or two passages at random. Speaking of Boileau, he says:—

"In Boileau there is really more of diffuseness than of brevity [he loves thus to slap a popular belief straight in the face]; few observe this, because [Boileau] abounds in short sentences; and few are aware that sentences may be very short, and the writer very prolix; as half a dozen stones rising out of a brook give the passenger more trouble than a plank across it." [He abounds in short, pert similes of this sort which seem almost to carry an argument in them.]

[Again] "Caligula spoke justly and admirably when he compared the sentences of Seneca *to sand without lime.*"

[And once more] "He must be a bad writer, or,

[1] I would strongly urge, however, the reading and purchase, if may be, of Colvin's charming little *Golden Treasury* collection from Landor.

however, a very indifferent one, to whom there are no inequalities. The plants of such tableland are diminutive and never worth gathering. . . . The vigorous mind has mountains to climb and valleys to repose in. Is there any sea without its shoal? On that which the poet navigates, he rises intrepidly as the waves riot around him, and sits composedly as they subside. . . ."

"Level the Alps one with another, and where is their sublimity? Raise up the Vale of Tempe to the downs above, and where are those sylvan creeks and harbors in which the imagination watches while the soul reposes, those recesses in which the gods partook of the weaknesses of mortals, and mortals the enjoyments of the gods."

The great learning of Landor and his vast information, taken in connection with his habits of self-indulgence (often of indolence), assure us that he must have had the rare talent, and the valuable one, of riddling books—that is, of skimming over them—with such wonderfully quick exercise of wit and judgment as to segregate the valuable from the valueless parts. 'T is not a bad quality; nor is it necessarily (as many suppose) attended by superficiality. The superficial man does indeed skim things; but he pounces as squarely and surely upon the bad

as upon the good; he works by mechanical process and progression—here a sentence and there a sentence; but the man who can race through a book well (as did Dr. Johnson and Landor), carries to the work—in his own genius for observation and quick discernment —a chemical mordant that bites and shows warning effervescence, and a signal to stay, only where there is something strong to bite.

LANDOR'S DOMESTICITIES

MEANWHILE, we have a sorry story to tell of Landor's home belongings. There is a storm brewing in that beautiful villa of Fiesole. Children have been born to the house, and he pets them, fondles them—seems to love them absorbingly. Little notelets which pass when they are away, at Naples, at Rome, are full of pleasantest paternal banter and yearning. But those children have run wild and are as vagrant as the winds.

The home compass has no fixed bearings and points all awry—the mother, never having sympathy with the work which had tasked Landor in those latter years, has, too, her own outside vanities and a persistent petulance, which

breaks out into rasping speech when Jupiter flings his thunderbolts. So Landor, in a strong rage of determination, breaks away: turns his back on wife and children—providing for them, however, generously—and goes to live again at Bath, in England.

For twenty-three years he stays there, away from his family (remembering, perhaps, in self-exculpating way, how Shakespeare had once done much the same), rambling over his old haunts, writing new verse, revamping old books, petting his Pomeranian dog, entertaining admiring guests, fuming and raving when crossed. He was more dangerously loud, too, than of old; and at last is driven away, to escape punishment for some scathing libels into which a storm of what he counted righteous rage has betrayed him. It must have been a pitiful thing to see this old, white-haired man —past eighty now—homeless, as good as childless, skulking, as it were, in London, just before sailing for the Continent,—appearing suddenly at Forster's house, seated upon his bed there, with Dickens in presence, mumbling about Latin poetry and its flavors!

He finds his way to Genoa, then to Florence, then to the Fiesole Villa once more; but it would seem as if there were no glad greetings on either side; and in a few days estrangement

comes again, and he returns to Florence. Twice or thrice more those visits to Fiesole are repeated, in the vague hope, it would seem, floating in the old man's mind, that by some miracle of heaven, aspects would change there —or perhaps in him—and black grow white, and gloom sail away under some new blessed gale from Araby. But it does never come; nor ever the muddied waters of that home upon the Florentine hills flow pure and bright again.

FINAL EXILE AND DEATH

He goes back—eighty-five now—toothless, and trembling under weight of years and wranglings, to the Via Nunziatina, in Florence; he has no means now—having despoiled himself for the benefit of those living at his Villa of Fiesole, who will not live with him, or he with them; he is largely dependent upon a brother in England. He passes a summer, in these times, with the American sculptor Story. He receives occasional wandering friends; has a new pet of a dog to fondle.

There is always a trail of worshipping women and poetasters about him to the very last; but the bad odor of his Bath troubles has followed him; Normanby, the British Minis-

ter, will give him no recognition; but there is no bending, no flinching in this great, astute, imperious, headstrong, ill-balanced creature. Indeed, he now carries under his shock of white hair, and in his tottering figure, a stock of that coarse virility which has distinguished him always—which for so many has its charm, and which it is hard to reconcile with the tender things of which he was capable;—for instance, that interview of Agamemnon and Iphigenia—so cunningly, delicately, and so feelingly told—as if the story were all his own, and had no Greek root—other than what found hold in the greensward of English Warwickshire. And I close our talk of Landor, by citing this: Iphigenia has heard her doom (you know the story); she must die by the hands of the priest —or, the ships, on which her father's hopes and his fortunes rest, cannot sail. Yet, she pleads;—there may have been mistakes in interpreting the cruel oracle,—there may be hope still,—

"The Father placed his cheek upon her head
And tears dropt down it; but, the king of men
Replied not: Then the maiden spoke once more,—
'O, Father, say'st thou nothing? Hear'st thou not

Me, whom thou ever hast, until this hour,
Listened to—fondly; and awakened me
To hear my voice amid the voice of birds
When it was inarticulate as theirs,
And the down deadened it within the nest.'
He moved her gently from him, silent still:
And this, and this alone, brought tears from her
Although she saw fate nearer: then, with sighs,—
'I thought to have laid down my hair before
Benignant Artemis, and not have dimmed
Her polisht altar with my virgin blood;
I thought to have selected the white flowers
To please the Nymphs, and to have asked of each
By name, and with no sorrowful regret,
Whether, since both my parents willed the change,
I might at Hymen's feet bend my clipt brow,
And—(after those who mind us girls the most)
Adore our own Athena, that she would
Regard me mildly with her azure eyes;
But—Father! to see you no more, and see
Your love, O Father! go, ere I am gone.'
Gently he moved her off, and drew her back,
Bending his lofty head far over hers,
And the dark depths of nature heaved and burst:
He turned away: not far, but silent still:
She now first shuddered; for in him—so nigh,

So long a silence seemed the approach of death
And like it. Once again, she raised her voice,—
'O Father! if the ships are now detained
And all your vows move not the Gods above
When the knife strikes me, there will be one prayer
The less to them; and, purer can there be
Any, or more fervent, than the daughter's prayer
For her dear father's safety and success?'
A groan that shook him, shook not his Resolve.
An aged man now entered, and without
One word, stept slowly on, and took the wrist
Of the pale maiden. She looked up and saw
The fillet of the priest, and calm cold eyes:
Then turned she, where her parent stood and cried,—
'O, Father! grieve no more! the ships can sail!' "

When we think of Landor, let us forget his wrangles—forget his wild impetuosities—forget his coarseness, and his sad, lonely death; and—instead—keep in mind, if we can, that sweet picture I have given you.

PROSE OF LEIGH HUNT

It was some two years before George IV. came to the Regency and at nearly the same date

with the establishment of Murray's *Quarterly,* that Mr. Leigh Hunt,[1] in company with his brother John Hunt, set up a paper called the *Examiner,* associated in later days with the strong names of Fonblanque and Forster. This paper was of a stiffly Whiggish and radical sort, and very out-spoken—so that when George IV., as Regent, seemed to turn his back on old Whig friends, and show favors to the Tories (as he did), Mr. Leigh Hunt wrote such sneering and abusive articles about the Regent that he was prosecuted, fined, and clapped into prison, where he stayed two years. They were lucky two years for him—making reputation for his paper and for himself; his friends and family dressed up his prison room with flowers (he loved overmuch little luxuries of that sort); Byron, Moore, Godwin, and the rest all came to see him; and there he caught the first faint breezes of that popular applause which blew upon him in a desultory and rather languid way for a good many years afterward—not wholly forsaking him when he had grown white-haired, and had brought his delicate, fine, but

[1]Leigh Hunt, b. 1784; d. 1859. *Francesca da Rimini,* 1816; *Recollections of Byron,* 1828; *The Indicator,* 1819–21; *Autobiography,* 1850.

somewhat feeble pen into the modern courts of criticism.

I do not suppose that anybody in our day goes into raptures over the writings of Leigh Hunt; nevertheless, we must bring him upon our record—all the more since there was American blood in him. His father, Isaac Hunt, was born in the Barbadoes, and studied in Philadelphia; in the latter city, Dr. Franklin and Tom Paine used to be visitors at his grandfather's house. At the outbreak of the Revolution, Hunt's father, who—notwithstanding his Philadelphia wife—was a bitter loyalist, went to England—his departure very much quickened by some threats of punishing his aggressive Toryism. He appears in England as a clergyman—ultimately wedded to Unitarian doctrines; finding his way sometimes to the studio of Benjamin West—talking over Pennsylvania affairs with that famous artist, and encountering there, as it chanced, John Trumbull, a student in painting—who in after years bequeathed an art-gallery to Yale College. It happens, too, that this Colonel Trumbull, in 1812, when the American war was in progress, was suspected as a spy, and escaped grief mainly by the intervention of Isaac Hunt.

The young Hunt began early to write—find-

ing his way into journalism of all sorts; his name associated sooner or later with *The News,* and dramatic critiques; with the *Examiner,* the *Reflector,* the *Indicator,* the *Companion,* and the *Liberal*—for which latter he dragged his family down into Italy at the instance of Byron or Shelley, or both. That *Liberal* was intended to astonish people and make the welkin ring; but the Italian muddle was a bad one, the *Liberal* going under, and an ugly quarrel setting in; Hunt revenging himself afterward by writing *Lord Byron and his Contemporaries,*—a book he ultimately regretted: he was never strong enough to make his bitterness respected. Honeyed words became him better; and these he dealt out—wave upon wave—on all sorts of unimportant themes. Thus, he writes upon "Sticks"; and again upon "Maid-servants"; again on "Bees and Butterflies" (which is indeed very pretty); and again "Upon getting up of a cold morning"—in which he compassionates those who are haled out of their beds by "harpy-footed furies"—discourses on his own experience and sees his own breath rolling forth like smoke from a chimney, and the windows frosted over.

"Then the servant comes in: 'It is very cold this morning, is it not?' 'Very cold, sir.' 'Very cold,

indeed, is n't it?' 'Very cold, indeed, sir.' 'More than usually so, is n't it, even for this weather?' 'Why, sir, I think it *is*, sir.' . . . And then the hot water comes: 'And is it quite hot? And is n't it too hot?' And what 'an unnecessary and villainous custom this is of shaving.' "

Whereupon he glides off, in words that flow as easily as water from a roof—into a disquisition upon flowing beards—instancing Cardinal Bembo and Michelangelo, Plato and the Turks. Listen again to what he has to say in his *Indicator* upon "A Coach":—

"It is full of cushions and comfort; elegantly colored inside and out; rich yet neat; light and rapid, yet substantial. The horses seem proud to draw it. The fat and fair-wigged coachman lends his sounding lash, his arm only in action, and that but little; his body well set with its own weight. The footman, in the pride of his nonchalance, holding by the straps behind, and glancing down sideways betwixt his cocked hat and neckcloth, standing swinging from East to West upon his springy toes. The horses rush along amidst their glancing harness. Spotted dogs leap about them, barking with a princely superfluity of noise. The hammer cloth trembles through all its fringe. The paint flashes in the sun."

Nothing can be finer—if one likes that sort

of fineness. We follow such a writer with no sense of his having addressed our intellectual nature, but rather with a sense of pleasurable regalement to our nostrils by some high wordy perfume.

Hawthorne, in *Our Old Home,* I think, tells us that even to extreme age, the boyishness of the man's nature shone through and made Hunt's speech like the chirp of a bird; he never tired of gathering his pretty roses of words. It is hard to think of such a man doing serious service in the rôle of radical journalist—as if he *could* speak dangerous things! And yet, who can tell? They say Robespierre delighted in satin facings to his coat, and was never without his *boutonnière.*

We all know the figure of Harold Skimpole, in Dickens's *Bleak House,* with traits so true to Leigh Hunt's, that the latter's friends held up a warning finger, and said: "For shame!" to the novelist. Indeed, I think Dickens felt relentings in his later years, and would have retouched the portrait; but a man who paints with flesh and blood pigments cannot retouch.

Certain it is that the household of Hunt was of a ram-shackle sort, and he and his always very much out at ends. Even Carlyle, who was a neighbor at Chelsea, was taken aback at the

easy way in which Hunt confronted the butcher-and-baker side of life; and the kindly Mrs. Carlyle drops a half-querulous mention of her shortened larder and the periodic borrowings of the excellent Mrs. Hunt.

HUNT'S VERSE

BUT over all this we stretch a veil now, woven out of the little poems that he has left. He wrote no great poems, to be sure; for here, as in his prose, he is earnestly bent on carving little baskets out of cherry-stones—little figures on cherry-stones—dainty hieroglyphics, but always on cherry-stones!

His "Rimini," embodying that old Dantesque story about Giovanni and Paolo and Francesca, is his longest poem. There are exceedingly pretty and delicate passages in it; I quote one or two:

"For leafy was the road with tall array
On either side of mulberry and bay,
And distant snatches of blue hills between;
And there the alder was, with its bright green,
And the broad chestnut, and the poplar's shoot
That, like a feather, waves from head to foot;
With ever and anon majestic pines;

And still, from tree to tree, the early vines
Hung, garlanding the way in amber lines.
. . . . . .
And then perhaps you entered upon shades,
Pillowed with dells and uplands 'twixt the glades
Through which the distant palace, now and then,
Looked forth with many windowed ken—
A land of trees which, reaching round about,
In shady blessing stretched their old arms out
With spots of sunny opening, and with nooks
To lie and read in—sloping into brooks,
Where at her drink you started the slim deer,
Retreating lightly with a lovely fear.
And all about the birds kept leafy house,
And sung and sparkled in and out the boughs,
And all about a lovely sky of blue
Clearly was felt, or down the leaves laughed through."

And so on—executed with ever so much of delicacy—but not a sign or a symbol of the grave and melancholy tone which should equip, even to the utmost hem of its descriptive passages, that tragic story of Dante.

Those deft, little feathery touches—about deer, and birds, and leafy houses, are not scored with the seriousness which in every line and pause should be married with the intensity

of the story. The painting of Mr. Watts, of the dead Francesca—ghastly though it be—has more in it to float one out into the awful current of Dante's story than a world of the happy wordy meshes of Mr. Hunt. A greater master would have brought in, maybe, all those natural beauties of the landscape—the woods, the fountains, the clear heaven—but they would all have been toned down to the low, tragic movement, which threatens, and creeps on and on, and which dims even the blue sky with forecast of its controlling gloom.

There is no such inaptness or inadequacy where Leigh Hunt writes of crickets and grasshoppers and musical boxes. In his version of the old classic story of "Hero and Leander," however, the impertinence (if I may be pardoned the language) of his dainty wordy dexterities is even more strikingly apparent. *His* Hero, waiting for her Leander, beside the Hellespont,

"Tries some work, forgets it, and thinks on,
Wishing with perfect love the time were gone,
And lost to the green trees with their sweet singers,
Taps on the casement-ledge with idle fingers."

No—this is not a Greek maiden listening

for the surge of the water before the stalwart swimmer of Abydos; it is a London girl, whom the poet has seen in a second-story back window, meditating what color she shall put to the trimming of her Sunday gown!

Far better and more beautiful is this fathoming of the very souls of the flowers:

"We are the sweet Flowers,
Born of sunny showers,
Think, whene'er you see us, what our beauty saith:
Utterance mute and bright,
Of some unknown delight,
We feel the air with pleasure, by our simple breath;
All who see us, love us;
We befit all places;
Unto sorrow we give smiles; and unto graces, graces.

"Mark our ways—how noiseless
All, and sweetly voiceless,
Though the March winds pipe to make our passage clear;
Not a whisper tells
Where our small seed dwells,
Nor is known the moment green, when our tips appear.
We tread the earth in silence,

In silence build our bowers,
And leaf by leaf in silence show, 'till we laugh atop, sweet Flowers!

. . . . . .

"Who shall say that flowers
Dress not Heaven's own bowers?
Who its love, without them, can fancy—or sweet floor?
Who shall even dare
To say we sprang not there,
And came not down that Love might bring one piece of heav'n the more?
Oh, pray believe that angels
From those blue Dominions
Brought us in their white laps down, 'twixt their golden pinions."

No poet of this—or many a generation past—has said a sweeter or more haunting word for the flowers.

We will not forget the "Abou-ben-Adhem"; nor shall its commonness forbid our setting this charmingly treated Oriental fable, at the end of our mention of Hunt—a memorial banderole of verse:—

"Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,

An Angel, writing in a book of gold.'
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold;
And to the presence in the room, he said,—
'What writest thou?' The Vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord
Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so;'
Replied the Angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, 'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'
The Angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again, with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo!—Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!"

AN IRISH POET

AMONG those who paid their visits of condolence to Leigh Hunt in the days of his prisonhood, was Moore,[1] the author of *Lalla Rookh* and of *The Loves of the Angels.* He was not used to paying visits in such quarters, for he had an instinctive dislike for all uncanny things and disagreeable places; nor was he ever a

[1] Thomas Moore, b. 1779; d. 1852. *Lalla Rookh,* 1817. *Life of Byron,* 1830. *Alciphron,* 1839.

great friend of Hunt; but he must have had a good deal of sympathy with him in that attack upon the Prince Regent which brought about Hunt's conviction. Moore, too, had his gibes at the Prince—thinking that great gentleman had been altogether too neglectful of the dignities of his high estate; but he was very careful that his gibes should be so modulated as not to put their author in danger.

Lalla Rookh may be little read nowadays; but not many years have passed since this poem and others of the author's used to get into the finest of bindings, and have great currency for bridal and birth-day gifts. Indeed, there is a witching melody in Moore's Eastern tales, and a delightful shimmer and glitter of language, which none but the most cunning of our present craft-masters in verse could reach.

Moore was born in Dublin, his father having kept a wine-shop there; and his mother (he tells us) was always anxious about the quality of his companions, and eager to build up his social standing—an anxiety which was grafted upon the poet himself, and which made him one of the wariest, and most coy and successful of society-seekers—all his life.

He was at the Dublin University—took easily to languages, and began spinning off

some of *Anacreon's* numbers into graceful English, even before he went up to London—on his old mother's savings—to study law at the Temple. He was charmingly presentable in those days; very small, to be sure, but natty, courteous, with a pretty modesty, and a voice that bubbled over into music whenever he recited one of his engaging snatches of melody. He has letters to Lords, too, and the most winning of tender speeches and smiles for great ladies. He comes to an early interview with the Prince of Wales—who rather likes the graceful Irish singer, and flatters him by accepting the dedication of *Anacreon* with smiles of condescension—which Mr. Moore perhaps counted too largely upon. Never had a young literary fellow of humble birth a better launch upon London society. His Lords' letters, and his pretty conciliatory ways, get him a place of value (when scarce twenty-four) in Bermuda. But he is not the man to lose his hold on London; so he goes over seas only to put a deputy in place, and then, with a swift run through our Atlantic cities, is back again. It is rather interesting to read now what the young poet says of us in those green days:—In Philadelphia, it appears, the people quite ran after him:

"I was much caressed while there . . . and

two or three little poems, of a very flattering kind, some of their choicest men addressed to me." [And again.] "Philadelphia is the only place in America which can boast any literary society." [Boston people, I believe, never admired Moore overmuch.]

Here again is a bit from his diary at Ballston—which was the Saratoga of that day:—

"There were about four hundred people—all stowed in a miserable boarding-house. They were astonished at our asking for basons and towels in our rooms; and thought we might condescend to come down to the Public Wash, with the other gentlemen, in the morning."

Poor, dainty, Moore! But he is all right when he comes back to London, and gives himself to old occupations of drawing-room service, and to the coining of new, and certainly very sweet and tender, Irish melodies. He loved to be tapped on the shoulder by great Dowagers, sparkling in diamonds, and to be entreated—"Now, dear Mr. Moore, *do* sing us one more song."

And it was pretty sure to come: he delighted in giving his very feeling and musical voice range over the heads of fine-feathered women. The peacock's plumes, the shiver of the crystal, the glitter of Babylon, always charmed him.

Nor was it all only tinkling sound that he gave back. For proof I cite one or two bits:—

"Then I sing the wild song, 't was once such a pleasure to hear,
When our voices commingling breathed, like one, on the ear;
And, as Echo far off thro' the vale, my sad orison rolls,
I think, O my love! 't is thy voice from the Kingdom of Souls
Faintly answering still the notes that once were so dear."

And again:—

"Dear Harp of my Country! farewell to thy numbers,
This sweet wreath of song is the last we shall twine.
Go sleep, with the Sunshine of Fame on thy slumbers,
Till touched by some hand less unworthy than mine.

"If the pulse of the patriot, soldier, or lover
Have throbbed at our lay, 't is thy glory alone;
I was *but* as the wind, passing heedlessly over,
And all the wild sweetness I wak'd was thy own."

This is better than dynamite to stir Ireland's best pulses, even now.

LALLA ROOKH

MR. MOORE had his little country vacations—among them, that notable stay up in the lovely county of Derbyshire, near to Ashbourne and Dovedale, and the old fishing grounds of Walton and of Cotton—where he wrote the larger part of his first considerable poem, *Lalla Rookh*—which had amazing success, and brought to its author the sum of £3,000. But I do not think that what inspiration is in it came to him from the hollows or the heights of Derbyshire; I should rather trace its pretty Oriental confusion of sound and scenes to the jingle of London chandeliers. Yet the web, the gossamer, the veils and the flying feet do not seem to touch ground anywhere in England, but shift and change and grow out of his Eastern readings and dreams.

Moore married at thirty-two—after he was known for the Irish melodies, but before the publication of *Lalla Rookh;* and in his *Letters and Diary* (if you read them—though they make an enormous mass to read, and frighten most people by their bulk), you will come upon

very frequent, and very tender mention of "Dear Bessie"—the wife. It is true, there were rumors that he wofully neglected her, but hardly well founded. Doubtless there was many a day and many a week when she was guarding the cottage and the children at Sloperton; and he bowing and pirouetting his way amongst the trailing robes of their ladyships who loved music and literature in London; but how should he refuse the invitations of his Lordship this or that? Or how should she—who has no robes that will stand alone—bring her pretty home gowns into that blazon of the salons? Always, too (if his letters may be trusted), he is eager to make his escape between whiles—wearied of this *tintamarre*—and to rush away to his cottage at Sloperton[1] for a little slippered ease, and a romp with the children. Poor children—they all drop away, one by one—two only reaching maturity—then dying. The pathetic stories of the sickening, the danger and the hush, come poignantly into his

[1] Sloperton was near the centre of Wiltshire, a little way northward from the old market-town of Devizes. Mr. William Winter, in his *Gray Days and Gold,* has given a very charming account of this home of Moore's and of its neighborhood—so full of English atmosphere, and of the graces and benignities of the Irish poet, as to make me think regretfully of my tamer mention.

Diary, and it does seem that the winning clatter of the world gets a hold upon his wrenched heart over-quickly again. But what right have you or I to judge in such matters?

There are chirrupy little men—and women, too,—on whom grief does not seem to take a hard grip; all the better for them! Moore, I think, was such a one, and was braced up always and everywhere by his own healthy pulses, and, perhaps, by a sense of his own sufficiency. His vanities are not only elastic, but —by his own bland and child-like admissions —they seem sometimes almost monumental. He writes in his *Diary,* "Shiel (that 's an Irish friend) says I am the first poet of the day, and join the beauty of the Bird-of-Paradise's plumes to the strength of the eagle's wing." Fancy a man copying that sort of thing into his own *Diary,* and regaling himself with it!

Yet he is full of good feeling—does not cherish resentments—lets who will pat him on the shoulder (though he prefers a lord's pat). Then he forgives injuries or slights grandly; was once so out with Jeffrey that a duel nearly came of it; but afterward was his hail-fellow and good friend for years. Sometimes he shows a magnanimous strain—far more than

his artificialities of make-up would seem to promise. Thus, being at issue with the publisher, John Murray (a long-dated difference), he determines on good advisement to be away with it; and so goes smack into the den of the great publisher and gives him his hand: such action balances a great deal of namby-pamby-ism.

But what surprises more than all about Moore, is the very great reputation that he had in his day. We, in these latter times, have come to reckon him (rather rashly, perhaps) only an arch gossipper of letters—a butterfly of those metropolitan gardens—easy, affable, witty, full of smiles, full of good feeling, full of pretty little rhythmical utterances—singing songs as easy as a sky-lark (and leaving the sky thereafter as empty); planting nothing that lifts great growth, or tells larger tale than lies in his own lively tintinnabulation of words.

Yet Byron said of him: "There is nothing Moore may not do, if he sets about it." Sydney Smith called him "A gentleman of small stature, but full of genius, and a steady friend of all that is honorable." Leigh Hunt says: "I never received a visit from him, but I felt as if I had been talking with Prior or Sir Charles

Sedley." It is certain that he must have been a most charming companion. Walter Scott says: "It would be a delightful addition to life if Thomas Moore had a cottage within two miles of me." Indeed, he was always quick to scent anything that might amuse, and to store it up. His diaries overflow with these bright specks and bits of talk, which may kindle a laugh, but do not nestle in the memory.

But considered as a poet whose longish work ought to live and charm the coming generations, his reputation certainly does not hold to the old illuminated heights. Poems of half a century ago, which *Lalla Rookh* easily outshone, have now put the pretty orientalisms into shade. Nor can we understand how so many did, and do, put such twain of verse-makers as Byron and Moore into one leash, as if they were fellows in power. In the comparison the author of the *Loves of the Angels* seems to me only a little important-looking, kindly pug—nicely combed, with ribbons about the neck—in an embroidered blanket, with jingling bells at its corners; and Byron—beside him—a lithe, supple leopard, with a tread that threatens and a dangerous glitter in the eye. Milk diet might sate that other; but this one, if occasion served, would lap blood.

A FORECAST

In the pages that follow we shall, among others, more or less notable, encounter again that lithe leopard in some of his wanton leaps —into verse, into marriage, into exile, and into the pit of death at Missolonghi.

CHAPTER V

We opened our budget in the last chapter with the *Quarterly Review,* which was just getting upon its legs through the smart, keen, and hard writing of Mr. William Gifford. It throve afterward under the coddling of the most literary of the Tory gentlemen in London, and its title has always been associated with the names of John Wilson Croker, of Dr. Southey, and of Mr. Lockhart. It is a journal, too, which has always been tied by golden bonds to the worship of tradition and of vested privilege, and which has always been ready with its petulant, impatient bark of detraction at reform or reformers, or at any books which may have had a scent of Liberalism. Leigh Hunt, of course, came in for periodic scathings—some of them deserved; some not deserved. Indeed, I am half disposed to repent what may have seemed a too flippant mention of this very graceful poet and essayist. Of a surety, there is an abounding affluence of easy language—gushing and dis-

porting over his pages—which lures one into reading and into dreamy acquiescence; but read as much as we may, and as long as we will, we shall go away from the reading with a certain annoyance that there is so little to keep out of it all—so little that sticks to the ribs and helps.

As for the poet Moore, of whom also we may have spoken in terms which may seem of too great disparagement to those who have loved to linger in his

"Vale of Cashmere
With its roses, the brightest that earth ever gave.
Its temples, and grottos, and fountains as clear
As the love-lighted eyes that hang over their wave,"

no matter what may become of these brilliant orientalisms, or of his life of Byron, or of his diaries, and his "Two-penny Post Bag," it is certain that his name will be gratefully kept alive by his sparkling, patriotic, and most musical Irish melodies; and under that sufficient monument we leave him.

As for Landor—surely the pages in which we dealt with him were not too long: a strange, strong bit of manhood—as of one fed on col-

lops of bear's meat; a big animal nature, yet wonderfully transfused by a vivid intellectuality—fine and high—that pierced weighty subjects to their core; and yet—and yet, singing such heart-shivering tributes as that to Rose Aylmer: coarse as the bumpkins on the sheep wolds of Lincoln, and yet with as fine subtleties in him as belonged to the young Greeks who clustered about the writer of the *Œdipus Tyrannus*.

THE "FIRST GENTLEMAN"

KING GEORGE IV. was an older man than any of those we have commented on; indeed, he was a prematurely old man at sixty-five—feeling the shivers and the stings of his wild life: I suppose no one ever felt the approaches of age more mortifyingly. He had counted so much on being the fine gentleman to the last—such a height, such a carriage, such a grace! It was a dark day for him when his mirror showed wrinkles that his cosmetics would not cover, and a stoop in the shoulders which his tailors could not bolster out of sight. Indeed, in his later years he shrunk from exposure of his infirmities, and kept his gouty step out of reach of the curious, down at Windsor, where he built a cottage in a wood; and arranged his

drives through the Park so that those who had admired this Apollo at his best should never know of his shakiness. Thither went his conclave of political advisers—sometimes Canning, the wonderful orator—sometimes the Duke of Wellington, with the honors of Waterloo upon him—sometimes young Sir Robert Peel, just beginning to make his influence felt; oftener yet, Charles Greville, whose memoirs are full of piquant details about the royal household—not forgetting that army of tailors and hair-dressers who did their best to assuage the misery and gratify the vanities of the gouty king. And when he died—which he hated exceedingly to do—in 1830, there came to light such a multitude of waistcoats, breeches, canes, snuff-boxes, knee-buckles, whips, and wigs, as I suppose were never heaped before around any man's remains. The first gentleman in Europe could not, after all, carry these things with him. His brother, William IV., who succeeded him, was a bluff old Admiral—with not so high a sense of the proprieties of life as George; but honester even in his badnesses (which were very many) and, with all his coarseness and vulgarity, carrying a brusque, sailor-like frankness that half redeemed his peccadilloes. In those stormy times which be-

longed to the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832, he showed nerve and pluck, and if he split the air pretty often with his oaths, he never offended by a wearying dilettanteism, or by foppery. In the year 1837 he died; and then and there began—within the memory of a good many of us old stagers—that reign of his young niece Victoria, daughter of his brother, the Duke of Kent (who had died seventeen years before)—which reign still continues, and is still resplendent with the virtues of the Sovereign and the well-being of her people.

Under these several royal hands, the traditional helpfulness to men of letters had declared itself in pensions and civil appointments; Southey had come to his laureateship, and his additional pension; we found the venerable Wordsworth making a London pilgrimage for a "kissing of hands," and the honor of a royal stipend; Walter Scott had received his baronetcy at the hands of George IV., and that dilettante sovereign would have taken Byron (whom we shall presently encounter) patronizingly by the hand, except the fiery poet—scenting slights everywhere—had flamed up in that spirit of proud defiance, which afterward declared itself with a fury of denunciation in the *Irish Avatar* (1821).

WILLIAM HAZLITT

HAZLITT AND HALLAM

ANOTHER noticeable author of this period, whose cynicism kept him very much by himself, was William Hazlitt;[1] he was the son of a clergyman and very precocious—hearing Coleridge preach in his father's pulpit at Wem in Shropshire, and feeling his ambition stirred by the notice of that poet, who was attracted by the shrewd speech and great forehead of the boy. Young Hazlitt drifts away from such early influences to Paris and to painting—he thinking to master that art. But in this he does nothing satisfying; he next appears in London, to carve a way to fame with his pen. He is an acute observer; he is proud; he is awkward; he is shy. Charles Lamb and sister greatly befriend him and take to him; and he, with his hate of conventionalisms, loves those Lamb chambers and the whist parties, where he can go, in whatever slouch costume he may choose; poor Mary Lamb, too, perceiving that

[1]William Hazlitt, b. 1778; d. 1830. *Characters of Shakespeare,* 1817; *Table Talk,* 1821; *Liber Amoris,* 1823; *Life of Napoleon,* 1828; *Life* (by Grandson), 1867; a later book of memoirs, *Four Generations of a Literary Family,* appeared 1897. (It gave nothing essentially new, and was quickly withdrawn from sale.)

he has a husband-ish hankering after a certain female friend of hers—blows hot and cold upon it, in her quaint little notelets, with a delighted and an undisguised sense of being a party to their little game. It ended in a marriage at last; not without its domestic infelicities; but these would be too long, and too dreary for the telling. Mr. Hazlitt wrote upon a vast variety of topics—upon art, and the drama, upon economic questions, upon politics —as wide in his range as Leigh Hunt; and though he was far more trenchant, more shrewd, more disputatious, more thoughtful, he did lack Hunt's easy pliancy and grace of touch. Though a wide reader and acute observer, Hazlitt does not contend or criticise by conventional rules; his law of measurement is not by old syntactic, grammatic, or dialectic practices; there 's no imposing display of critical implements (by which some operators dazzle us), but he cuts—quick and sharp—to the point at issue. We never forget his strenuous, high-colored personality, and the seething of his prejudices—whether his talk is of Napoleon (in which he is not reverent of average British opinion), or of Sir Joshua Reynolds, or of Burke's brilliant oratorical apostrophes. But with fullest recognition of his acuteness, and

independence, there remains a disposition (bred by his obstinacies and shortcomings) to take his conclusions *cum grano salis*. He never quite disabuses our mind of the belief that he is a paid advocate; he never conquers by calm; and, upon the whole, impresses one as a man who found little worth the living for in this world, and counted upon very little in any other.

The historian, Henry Hallam,[1] on the other hand, who was another notable literary character of this epoch, was full of all serenities of character—even under the weight of such private griefs as were appalling. He was studious, honest, staid—with a great respect for decorum; he would have gravitated socially—as he did—rather to Holland House than to the chambers where Lamb presided over the punch-bowl. In describing the man one describes his histories; slow, calm, steady even to prosiness, yet full; not entertaining in a gossipy sense; not brilliant; scarce ever eloquent. If he is in doubt upon a point he tells you so; if there has been limitation to his research, there is no concealment of it; I think, upon the whole, the

[1]Henry Hallam, b. 1777; d. 1859. *Middle Ages*, 1818. *Literature of Europe*, 1837–39. Sketch of *Life*, by Dean Milman in *Transactions of Royal Society*, vol. x.

honestest of all English historians. In his search for truth, neither party, nor tradition, nor religious scruples make him waver. None can make their historic journey through the Middle Ages without taking into account the authorities he has brought to notice, and the path that he has scored.

And yet there is no atmosphere along that path as he traces it. People and towns and towers and monarchs pile along it, clearly defined, but in dead shapes. He had not the art —perhaps he would have disdained the art—to touch all these with picturesque color, and to make that page of the world's history glow and palpitate with life.

Among those great griefs which weighed upon the historian, and to which allusion has been made, I name that one only with which you are perhaps familiar—I mean the sudden death of his son Arthur, a youth of rare accomplishments—counted by many of more brilliant promise than any young Englishman of his time—yet snatched from life, upon a day of summer's travel, as by a thunderbolt. He lies buried in Clevedon Church, which overhangs the waters of Bristol Channel; and his monument is Tennyson's memorial poem.

I will not quote from it; but cite only the

lines "out of which" (says Dr. John Brown), "as out of the well of the living waters of Love, flows forth all *In Memoriam.*"

"Break—break—break
At the foot of thy crags, O sea:
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.
And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O, for the touch of a vanished hand
And the sound of a voice that is still."

I have purposely set before you two strongly contrasted types of English literary life in that day—in William Hazlitt and Henry Hallam—the first representing very nearly what we would call the Bohemian element—ready to-day for an article in the *Edinburgh Review,* and to-morrow for a gibe in the *Examiner,* or a piece of diablerie in the *London Magazine;* Hallam, on the other hand, representing the sober and orderly traditions, colored by the life and work of such men as Hume, Roscoe, and Gibbon.

QUEEN OF A SALON

ANOTHER group of literary people, of a very varied sort, we should have found in the sa-

lons of my Lady Blessington,[1] who used to hold court on the Thames—now by Piccadilly, and again at Gore House—in the early part of this century. She was herself a writer; nor is her personal history without its significance, as an outgrowth of times when George IV. was setting the pace for those ambitious of social distinction.

She was the quick-witted daughter of an Irish country gentleman of the Lucius O'Trigger sort—nicknamed Beau Power. He loved a whip and fast horses—also dogs, powder, and blare. He wore white-topped boots, with showy frills and ruffles; he drank hard, swore harder—wasted his fortune, abused his wife, but was "very fine" to the end. He was as cruel as he was fine; shot a peasant once, in cold blood, and dragged him home after his saddle beast. He worried his daughter, Marguerite (Lady Blessington), into marrying, at fifteen, a man whom she detested. It gave relief, however, from paternal protection, until the husband proved worse than the father, and

[1] Marguerite Power (Countess of Blessington), b. 1789; d. 1849; m. Captain Farmer, 1804; m. Earl of Blessington, 1817. 1822–1829, travelling on Continent. *Idler in Italy,* 1839–40 (first novel, about 1833). *Conversations with Lord Byron,* 1834. Her special *reign* in London, 1831 to 1848.

separation ensued—made good (after some years of tumultuous, uneasy life) by the violent and providential death of the recreant husband. Shortly after, she married Lord Blessington, a rich Irish nobleman, very much blasé, seven years her senior, but kind and always generous with her. Then came travel in a princely way over the Continent, with long stays in pleasant places, and such lavish spendings as put palaces at their disposal—of all which a readable and gossipy record is given in her *Idler in Italy* and *Idler in France*—books well known, in their day, in America. Of course she encountered in these ramblings Landor, Shelley, Byron, and all notable Englishmen, and when she returned to London it was to establish that brilliant little court already spoken of. She was admirably fitted for sovereign of such a court; she was witty, ready, well-instructed; was beautiful, too, and knew every art of the toilet.[1]

More than this, she was mistress of all the pretty and delicate arts of conciliation; had amazing aptitude for accommodating herself

[1] There is a very interesting, but by no means flattered, account of Lady Blessington and of her dinners and receptions in Greville's *Journal of the Reign of Queen Victoria,* chapter iv., p. 167, vol. i.

to different visitors—flattering men without letting them know they were flattered—softening difficulties, bringing enemies together, magnetizing the most obstinate and uncivil into acquiescence with her rules of procedure. Withal she had in large development those Irish traits of generosity and cheer, with a natural, winning way, which she studied to make more and more taking. One of those women who, with wit, prettiness, and grace, count it the largest, as it is (to them) the most agreeable duty of life, to be forever making social conquests, and forever reaping the applause of drawing-rooms. And if we add to the smiles and the witty banter and the persuasive tones of our lady, the silken hangings, the velvet carpets, the mirrors multiplying inviting alcoves, with paintings by Cattermole or Stothard, and marbles, maybe by Chantrey or Westmacott, and music in its set time by the best of London masters, and cooking in its season as fine as the music,—and we shall be at no loss to measure the attractions of Gore House, and to judge of the literary and social aspects which blazed there on the foggy banks of the Thames. No wonder that old Samuel Rogers, prince of epicures, should love to carry his pinched face and his shrunk shanks into such sunny latitudes.

Moore, too, taking his mincing steps into those regions, would find banquets to remind him of the Bowers of Bendemeer. Possibly, too, the Rev. Sydney Smith, without the fear of Lady Holland in his heart or eyes, may have pocketed his dignity as Canon of St. Paul's and gone thither to taste the delights of the table or of the talk. Even Hallam, or Southey (on his rare visits to town), may have gone there. Lady Blessington was always keenly awake for such arrivals. Even Brougham used to take sometimes his clumsy presence to her brilliant home; and so, on occasion, did that younger politician, and accomplished gentleman, Sir Robert Peel. Procter—better known as Barry Cornwall—the song-writer, was sure to know his way to those doors and to be welcomed; and Leigh Hunt was always eager to play off his fine speeches amid such surroundings of wine and music.

The Comte d'Orsay, artist and man of letters, who married (1827) a daughter of Lord Blessington (step-daughter of the Countess), was a standing ornament of the house; and rivalling him in their cravats and other millinery were two young men who had long careers before them. These were Benjamin Disraeli and Edward Lytton Bulwer.

YOUNG BULWER AND DISRAELI

It was some years before the passage of the Reform Bill, and before the death of George IV., that Bulwer[1] blazed out in *Pelham* (1828), *The Disowned,* and *Devereux,* making conquest of the novel-reading town, at a time when *Quentin Durward* (1823) was not an old book, and *Woodstock* (1826) still fresh. And if Pelhamism had its speedy subsidence, the same writer put such captivating historic garniture and literary graces about the Italian studies of *Rienzi,* and of the *Last Days of Pompeii,* as carry them now into most libraries, and insure an interested reading—notwithstanding a strong sensuous taint and sentimental extravagances.

He had scholarship; he had indefatigable industry; he had abounding literary ambitions and enthusiasms, but he had no humor; I am afraid he had not a very sensitive conscience;

[1]Edward L. Bulwer (Lord Lytton), b. 1803; d. 1873; *Pelham,* 1828; *Rienzi,* 1835; *Caxton Novels,* 1849–53; *Richelieu,* 1839; his *Biography* (never fully completed) has been written by his son, the second Lord Lytton. It is doubtful, however, if its developments, and inevitable counter-developments, have brought any access of honor to the elder Bulwer.

and he had no such prevailing refinement of literary taste as to make his work serve as the exemplar for other and honester workers.

Benjamin Disraeli[1] in those days overmatched him in cravats and in waistcoats, and was the veriest fop of all fop-land. No more beautiful accessory could be imagined to the drawing-room receptions over which Lady Blessington presided, and of which the ineffable Comte d'Orsay was a shining and a fixed light, than this young Hebraic scion of a great Judean house—whose curls were of the color of a raven's wing, and whose satin trumpery was ravishing!

And yet—this young foppish Disraeli, within fifty years, held the destinies of Great Britain in his hand, and had endowed the Queen with the grandest title she had ever worn—that of Empress of India. Still further, in virtue of his old friendship for his fellow fop Bulwer, he sends the son of that novelist (in the person of the second Lord Lytton) to preside over a nation numbering two hundred millions of souls. Whoever can accomplish these ends with such

[1] Benjamin Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield), b. 1804; d. 1881. *Vivian Grey,* 1826–27; *Contarini Fleming,* 1832; *Coningsby,* 1844; *Lothair,* 1870. Was Premier, 1867, 1874–80. Created Earl of Beaconsfield, 1876.

a people as that of Great Britain must needs have something in him beyond mere fitness for the pretty salons of my Lady Blessington.

And what was it? Whatever you may count it, there is surely warrant for telling you something of his history and his antecedents: Three or more centuries ago—at the very least—a certain Jew of Cordova, in Spain, driven out by the terrors of the Inquisition, went to Venice—established himself there in merchandise, and his family throve there for two hundred years. A century and a half ago,—when the fortunes of Venice were plainly on the wane—the head of this Jewish family—Benjamin Disraeli (grandfather of the one of whom we speak) migrated to England. This first English Benjamin met with success on the Exchange of London, and owing to the influences of his wife (who hated all Jewry) he discarded his religious connection with Hebraism, went to the town of Enfield, a little north of London —with a good fortune, and lived there the life of a retired country gentleman. He had a son Isaac, who devoted himself to the study of literature, and showed early strong bookish proclivities—very much to the grief of his father, who had a shrewd contempt for all such follies. Yet the son Isaac persisted, and did little

else through a long life, save to prosecute inquiries about the struggles of authors and the lives of authors and the works of authors—all ending in that agglomeration which we know as the *Curiosities of Literature*—a book which sixty years since used to be reckoned a necessary part of all well-equipped libraries; but which—to tell the truth—has very little value; being without any method, without fulness, and without much accuracy. It is very rare that so poor a book gets so good a name, and wears it so long.

Oddly enough, this father, who had devoted a life to the mere gossip of literature, as it were, warns his son Benjamin against literary pursuits (he wrote three or four novels indeed,[1] but they are never heard of), and the son studied mostly under private tutors; there is no full or trustworthy private biography of him: but we know that in the years 1826–1827—only a short time before the Lady Blessington coterie was in its best feather—he wrote a novel called *Vivian Grey,*—the author being then under twenty-two—which for a time divided attention with *Pelham.* In club circles it made even more talk. It is full of pictures

[1] *Vaurien,* 1797; *Flim-Flams,* 1805; *Despotism,* or *Fall of the Jesuits,* 1811.

of people of the day; Brougham and Wilson Croker, and Southey, and George Canning, and Mrs. Coutts and Lady Melbourne (Caroline Lamb), all figure in it. He never gave over, indeed, putting portraits in his books—as Goldwin Smith can tell us. The larger Reviews were coy of praise and coy of condemnation: indeed 't was hard to say which way it pointed—socially or politically; but, for the scandal-mongers, there was in it very appetizing meat. He became a lion of the salons; and he enjoyed the lionhood vastly. Chalon[1] painted him in that day—a very Adonis—gorgeous in velvet coat and in ruffled shirt.

But he grew tired of England and made his trip of travel; it followed by nearly a score of years after that of Childe Harold, and was doubtless largely stimulated by it; three years he was gone—wandering over all the East, as well as Europe. He came back with an epic (published 1834), believing that it was to fill men's minds, and to conquer a place for him among the great poets of the century. In this he was dismally mistaken; so he broke his lyre, and that was virtually the last of his poesy.

[1] A. E. Chalon, an artist much in vogue in the days of "Tokens," who also painted Lady Blessington,—but of no lasting reputation.

There came, however, out of these journeyings, besides the poem, the stories of *Contarini Fleming,* of *The Young Duke,* and *The Wondrous Tale of Alroy.* These kept his fame alive, but seemed after all only the work of a man playing with literature, rather than of one in earnest.

With ambition well sharpened now, by what he counted neglect, he turned to politics; as the son of a country gentleman of easy fortune, it was not difficult to make a place for himself. Yet, with all the traditions of a country gentleman about him, in his first moves he was not inclined to Toryism; indeed, he startled friends by his radicalism—was inclined to shake hands at the outset with the arch-agitator O'Connell; but not identifying himself closely with either party; and so, to the last it happened that his sympathies were halved in most extraordinary way; he had the concurrence of the most staid, Toryish, and conservative of country voters; and no man could, like himself, bring all the jingoes of England howling at his back. Indeed, nothing is more remarkable in his career than his shrewd adaptation of policy to meet existing, or approaching tides of feeling; he does not avow great convictions of duty, and stand by them; but he

toys with convictions; studies the weakness, as he does the power, of those with him or against him; shifts his ground accordingly; rarely lacking poise, and the attitude of seeming steadfastness; whipping with his scourge of a tongue the little lapses of his adversaries till they shrill all over the kingdom; and putting his own triumphs—great or small—into such scenic combination, with such beat of drum, and blare of trumpet, as to make all England break out into bravos.[1] There was not that literary quality in his books, either early or late, which will give to them, I think, a very long life; but there was in the man a quality of shrewdness and of power which will be long remembered—perhaps not always to his honor.

I do not yield to any in admiration for the noble and philanthropic qualities which belong to the venerable, retired statesman of Hawarden; yet I cannot help thinking that if such a firm and audacious executive hand as belonged to Lord Beaconsfield, had—in the season of General Gordon's stress at Khartoum—con-

[1] In illustration of his comparatively humble position early, Greville in his later *Journal,* Chapter XXIV., speaks of Disraeli's once proposing to Moxon, the publisher, to take him (Disraeli) into partnership; Greville says Moxon told him this.

trolled the fleets and armies of Great Britain, there would have been quite other outcome to the sad imbroglio in the Soudan. When war is afoot, the apostles of peace are the poorest of directors.

I go back for a moment to that Blessington Salon—in order to close her story. There was a narrowed income—a failure of her jointure—a shortening of her book sales; but, notwithstanding, there was a long struggle to keep that brilliant little court alive. One grows to like so much the music and the fêtes and the glitter of the chandeliers, and the unction of flattering voices! But at last the ruin came; on a sudden the sheriffs were there; and clerks with their inventories in place of the "Tokens" and "annuals"—with their gorgeous engravings by Finden & Heath—which the Mistress had exploited; and she hurried off—after the elegant D'Orsay—to Paris, hoping to rehabilitate herself, on the Champs Elysées, under the wing of Louis Napoleon, just elected President. I chanced to see her in her coupé there, on a bright afternoon early in 1849—with elegant silken wraps about her and a shimmer of the old kindly smile upon her shrunken face—dashing out to the Bois; but within three months there was another sharp change; she—

dead, and her pretty *decolleté* court at an end forever.

THE POET OF NEWSTEAD

THE reminiscences and conversations of Lord Byron, which we have at the hands of Lady Blessington, belong to a time, of course, much earlier than her series of London triumphs, and date with her journeys in Italy. A score of years at least before ever the chandeliers of her Irish ladyship were lighted in Gore House, Byron[1] had gone sailing away from England under a storm of wrath; and he never came back again. Indeed it is not a little extraordinary that one of the most typical of English

[1]George Noel Gordon (Lord Byron), b. (London) 1788; d. (Greece) 1824. *Hours of Idleness,* 1807; *English Bards, etc.,* 1809; *Childe Harold* (2 Cantos), 1812; *Don Juan,* 1819–24; Moore's *Life,* 1830; Trelawney, *Recollections, etc.,* 1858. The first volume (Macmillan, 1897) has appeared of a new edition of Byron's works, with voluminous notes (in over-fine print) by William Ernest Henley. The editorial stand-point may be judged by this averment from the preface,—"the sole English poet bred since Milton to live a master-influence in the world at large."

Another full edition of works, with editing by Earl of Lovelace (grandson of Byron), is announced as shortly to appear from the press of Murray in London, and of Scribners in New York.

poets, should—like Landor, with whom he had many traits in common—have passed so little of his active life on English ground. Like Landor, he loved England most when England was most behind him. Like Landor, he was gifted with such rare powers as belonged to few Englishmen of that generation. In Landor, these powers, so far as they expressed themselves in literary form, were kept in check by the iron rulings of a scrupulous and exacting craftsmanship; while in Byron they broke all trammels, whether of craftsmanship or reason, and glowed and blazed the more by reason of their audacities. Both were prone to great tempests of wrath which gave to both furious joys, and, I think, as furious regrets.

Byron came by his wrathfulness in good hereditary fashion—as we shall find if we look back only a little way into the records of that Newstead family. Newstead Abbey (more properly Priory, the archæologists tell us) is the name of that great English home—half a ruin—associated with the early years of the poet, but never for much time or in any true sense a home of his own. It is some ten miles north of Nottingham, in an interesting country, where lay the old Sherwood Forest, with

its traditions of Robin Hood; there is a lichened Gothic front which explains the Abbey name; there are great rambling corridors and halls; there is a velvety lawn, with the monument to "Boatswain," the poet's dog; but one who goes there—with however much of Byronic reading in his or her mind—will not, I think, warm toward the locality; and the curious foot-traveller will incline to trudge away in a hunt for Annesley, and the "Antique Oratory."

Well, in that ancient home, toward the end of the last century, there lived, very much by himself, an old Lord Byron, who some thirty years before, in a fit of wild rage, had killed a neighbor and kinsman of the name of Chaworth; there was indeed a little show of a duel about the murder—which was done in a London tavern, and by candle-light. His peerage, however, only saved this "wicked lord," as he was called, from prison; and at Newstead his life smouldered out in 1798, under clouds of hate, and of distrust. His son was dead before him; so was his grandson, the last heir in direct line; but he had a younger brother, John, who was a great seaman—who published accounts of his voyages,[1] which seem always to

[1] Byron's *Narrative,* published in the first volume of *Hawkesworth's Collection.* Hon. John Byron, Admiral, etc., was at one time Governor of Newfoundland; b. 1723; d. 1786.

have been stormy, and which lend, maybe, some realistic touches to the shipwreck scenes in "Don Juan." A son of this voyager was the father of the poet, and was reputed to be as full of wrath and turbulence as his uncle who killed the Chaworth; and his life was as thick with disaster as that of the unlucky voyager. His first marriage was a runaway one with a titled lady, whose heart he broke, and who died leaving that lone daughter who became the most worthy Lady Augusta Leigh. For second wife he married Miss Gordon, a Scotch heiress, the mother of the poet, whose fortune he squandered, and whose heart also he would have broken—if it had been of a breaking quality. With such foregoers of his own name, one might look for bad blood in the boy; nor was his mother saint-like; she had her storms of wrath; and from the beginning, I think, gave her boy only cruel milk to drink.

His extreme boyhood was passed near to Aberdeen, with the Highlands not far off. How much those scenes impressed him, we do not know; but that some trace was left may be found in verses written near his death:—

"He who first met the Highland's swelling blue
Will love each peak that shows a kindred hue;
Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face
And clasp the mountain in his mind's embrace."

When the boy was ten, the wicked lord who had killed the Chaworth died; and the Newstead inheritance fell to the young poet. We can imagine with what touch of the pride that shivers through so many of his poems, this lad—just lame enough to make him curse that unlucky fate—paced first down the hall at Newstead—thenceforth master there—a Peer of England.

But the estate was left in sorry condition; the mother could not hold it as a residence; so they went to Nottingham—whereabout the boy seems to have had his first schooling. Not long afterward we find him at Harrow, not far out of London, where he makes one or two of the few friendships which abide; there, too, he gives first evidence of his power over language.

It is at about this epoch, also, that on his visits to Nottingham—which is not far from the Chaworth home of Annesley—comes about the spinning of those little webs of romance which are twisted afterward into the beautiful Chaworth "Dream." It is an old story to tell, yet how everlastingly fresh it keeps!

"The maid was on the eve of womanhood;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,

And that was shining on him; he had looked
Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, nor being, but in hers,
She was his voice . . . upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony."

As a matter of fact, Miss Chaworth was two years older, and far more mature than he; she was gentle too, and possessed of a lady-like calm, which tortured him—since he could not break it down. Indeed, through all the time when he was sighing, she was looking over his head at Mr. Musters—who was bluff and hearty, and who rode to the hounds, and was an excellent type of the rollicking, self-satisfied, and beef-eating English squire—whom she married.

EARLY VERSE AND MARRIAGE

AFTER this episode came Cambridge, and those *Hours of Idleness* which broke out into verse, and caught the scathing lash of Henry Brougham—then a young, but well-known, advocate, who was conspiring with Sydney Smith and Jeffrey (as I have told you) to renovate the world through the pages of the *Edinburgh Review.*

But this lashing brought a stinging reply; and the clever, shrewd, witty couplets of Byron's satire upon the Scottish Reviewers (1809), convinced all scholarly readers that a new and very piquant pen had come to the making of English verse. Nor were Byron's sentimentalisms of that day all so crude and ill-shapen as Brougham would have led the public to suppose. I quote a fragment from a little poem under date of 1808—he just twenty:

"The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now,
Thy vows are all broken
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

"They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well;
Long, long shall I rue thee
Too deeply to tell."

Naturally enough, our poet is beaming with the success of his satire, which is widely read,

and which has made him foes of the first rank; but what cares he for this? He goes down with a company of fellow roisterers, and makes the old walls of Newstead ring with the noisy celebration of his twenty-first birthday; and on the trail of that country revel, and with the sharp, ringing couplets of his "English Bards" crackling on the public ear, he breaks away for his first joyous experience of Continental travel. This takes him through Spain and to the Hellespont and among the isles of Greece —seeing visions there and dreaming dreams, all which are braided into that tissue of golden verse we know as the first two cantos of *Childe Harold.*

On his return, and while as yet this poem of travel is on the eve of publication, he prepares himself for a new *coup* in Parliament—being not without his oratorical ambitions. It was in February of 1812 that he made his maiden speech in the House of Lords—carefully worded, calm, not without quiet elegancies of diction—but not meeting such reception as his extravagant expectation demanded; whatever he does, he wishes met with a tempest of approval; a dignified welcome, to his fiery nature, seems cold.

But the publication of *Childe Harold,* only a

short time later, brings compensating torrents of praise. His satire had piqued attention without altogether satisfying it; there was little academic merit in it—none of the art which made *Absalom and Achitophel* glow, or which gleamed upon the sword-thrusts of the *Dunciad;* but its stabs were business-like; its couplets terse, slashing, and full of truculent, scorching *vires iræ.* This other verse, however, of *Childe Harold*—which took one upon the dance of waves and under the swoop of towering canvas to the groves of "Cintra's glorious Eden," and among those Spanish vales where Dark Guadiana "rolls his power along"; and thence on, by proud Seville, and fair Cadiz, to those shores of the Egean, where

"Still his honeyed wealth Hymettus yields,—" [1]

[1]The short line is not enough. We must give the burden of that apostrophe to the land of Hellas, though only in a note:

"Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields;
Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
And still his honeyed wealth Hymettus yields.
There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
The free-born wanderer of the mountain air;
Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds,
Still in his beams Mendeli's marbles glare,
Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair."

was of quite another order. There is in it, moreover, the haunting personality of the proud, broken-spirited wanderer, who tells the tale and wraps himself in the veil of mysterious and piquant sorrows: Withal there is such dash and spirit, such mastery of language, such marvellous descriptive power, such subtle pauses and breaks, carrying echoes beyond the letter—as laid hold on men and women—specially on women—in a way that was new and strange. And this bright meteor had flashed athwart a sky where such stars as Southey, and Scott, and Rogers, and the almost forgotten Crabbe, and Coleridge, and Wordsworth had been beaming for many a day. Was it strange that the doors of London should be flung wide open to this fresh, brilliant singer who had blazed such a path through Spain and Greece, and who wore a coronet upon his forehead?

He was young, too, and handsome as the morning; and must be mated—as all the old dowagers declared. So said his friends—his sister chiefest among them; and the good Lady Melbourne (mother-in-law of Lady Caroline Lamb)—not without discreet family reasons of her own—fixed upon her charming niece, Miss Milbanke, as the one with whom the new

poet should be coupled, to make his way through the wildernesses before him. And there were other approvals; even Tom Moore —who, of all men, knew his habits best—saying a reluctant "Yes"—after much hesitation. And so, through a process of coy propositions and counter-propositions, the marriage was arranged at last, and came about down at Seaham House (near Stockton-on-Tees), the country home of the father, Sir Ralph Milbanke.

"Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The starlight of his boyhood; as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the Antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then—
As in that hour—a moment o'er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced; and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reeled around him." [1]

[1] I cite that part of the "Dream" which, though written much time after, was declared by the poet, and by both friends and foes, to represent faithfully his attitude—both moral and physical—on the occasion of his marriage.

Yet the service went on to its conclusion; and the music pealed, and the welcoming shouts broke upon the air, and the adieux were spoken; and together they two drove away—into the darkness.

CHAPTER VI

OUR last chapter brought us into the presence of that vivacious specimen of royalty, George IV., who "shuffled off this mortal coil" in the year 1830, and was succeeded by that rough-edged, seafaring brother of his, William IV. This admiral-king was not brilliant; but we found brilliancy—of a sort—in the acute and disputatious essayist, William Hazlitt; yet he was far less companionable than acute, and contrasted most unfavorably with that serene and most worthy gentleman, Hallam, the historian. We next encountered the accomplished and showy Lady Blessington—the type of many a one who throve in those days, and who had caught somewhat of the glitter that radiated from the royal trappings of George the Fourth. We saw Bulwer, among others, in her salon; and we lingered longer over the wonderful career of that Disraeli, who died as Lord Beaconsfield —the most widely known man in Great Britain.

We then passed to a consideration of that

other wonderful adventurer—yet the inheritor of an English peerage—who had made his futile beginning in politics, and a larger beginning in poetry. To his career, which was left half-finished, we now recur.

LORD BYRON A HUSBAND

As we left him—you will remember—there was a jangle of marriage-bells; and a wearisome jangle it proved. Indeed Byron's marriage-bells were so preposterously out of tune, and lent their discord in such disturbing manner to the whole current of his life, that it may be worth our while to examine briefly the conditions under which the discord began. It is certain that all the gossips of London had been making prey of this match of the poetic hero of the hour for much time before its consummation.

Was he seeking a fortune? Not the least in the world; for though the burden of debt upon his estates was pressing him sorely, and his extravagances were reckless, yet large sums accruing from his swift-written tales of the "Corsair," "Lara," and "Bride of Abydos" were left untouched, or lavishly bestowed upon old or new friends; his liberality in those days

was most exceptional; nor does it appear that he had any very definite notion of the pecuniary aid which his bride might bring to him. She had, indeed, in her own right, what was a small sum measured by their standards of living; and her expectancies, that might have justified the title of heiress (which he sometimes gives to her in his journal), were then quite remote.

As for social position, there could be by such marriage no gain to him, for whom already the doors of England were flung wide open. Did he seek the reposeful dignity of a home? There may have been such fancies drifting by starts through his mind; but what crude fancies they must have been with a man who had scarcely lived at peace with his own mother, and whose only notion of enjoyment in the house of his ancestors was in the transport to Newstead of a roistering company of boon companions—followed by such boisterous revels there, and such unearthly din and ghostly frolics, as astounded the neighborhood!

The truth is, he marched into that noose of matrimony as he would have ordered a new suit from his tailor. When this whim had first seized him, he had written off formal proposals to Miss Milbanke—whom he knew at that time

only slightly; and she, with very proper prudence, was non-committal in her reply—though suggesting friendly correspondence. In his journal of a little later date we have this entry:

"November 30, 1813 [some fourteen months before the marriage]. Yesterday a very pretty letter from Annabella [the full name was Anna Isabella], which I answered. What an odd situation and friendship is ours! Without one spark of love on either side. She is a very superior woman, and very little spoiled . . . a girl of twenty, an only child and a *savante,* who has always had her own way."

This evidently does not promise a very ardent correspondence. Nay, it is quite possible that the quiet reserve he encounters here, does offer a refreshing contrast to the heated gush of which he is the subject in that Babel of London; maybe, too, there is something in the reserve and the assured dignity which reminds him of that earlier idol of his worship—Miss Chaworth of Annesley.

However, three months after this last allusion to Miss Milbanke, we have another entry in his journal, running thus:

"January 16, 1814. A wife would be my salvation. I am getting rather into an admiration

for C——, youngest sister of F——. [This is not Miss Milbanke—observe.] That she won't love me is very probable, nor shall I love her. The business would probably be arranged between the papa and me."

Perhaps it was in allusion to this new caprice that he writes to Moore, a few months later:

"Had Lady —— appeared to wish it, or even not to oppose it, I would have gone on, and very possibly married, with the same indifference which has frozen over the Black Sea of almost all my passions. . . . Obstacles the slightest even, stop me." (*Moore's Byron*, p. 255.)

And it is in the face of some such obstacle, lifting suddenly, that he flashes up, and over, into new proposals to Miss Milbanke; these are quietly accepted—very likely to his wonderment; for he says, in a quick ensuing letter to Moore:

"I certainly did not dream that she was attached to me, which it seems she has been for some time. I also thought her of a very cold disposition, in which I was also mistaken; it is a long story, and I won't trouble you with it. As to her virtues, and so on, you will hear enough of them (for she is a kind of *pattern* in the

north) without my running into a display on the subject."

A little over two months after the date of this they were married, and he writes to Murray in the same week:

"The marriage took place on the 2d inst., so pray make haste and congratulate away." [And to Moore, a few days later.] "I was married this day week. The parson has pronounced it; Perry has announced it, and the *Morning Post*, also, under head of 'Lord Byron's marriage'—as if it were a fabrication and the puff direct of a new stay-maker."

A month and a half later, in another Moore letter, alluding to the death of the Duke of Dorset (an old friend of his), he says:

"There was a time in my life when this event would have broken my heart; and all I can say for it now is—that it is n't worth breaking."

Two more citations, and I shall have done with this extraordinary record. In March, 1815 (the marriage having occurred in January), he writes to Moore from the house of his father-in-law, Sir Ralph Milbanke—a little northward of the Tees, in County Durham:

"I am in such a state of sameness and stagnation, and so totally occupied in consuming the fruits, and sauntering, and playing dull games at cards, and yawning, and trying to read old *Annual Registers* and the daily papers, and gathering shells on the shore, and watching the growth of stunted gooseberries in the garden, that I have neither time nor sense to say more than yours ever—B."

A STAY IN LONDON

On leaving the country for a new residence in London, his growing cheer and spirits are very manifest:

"I have been very comfortable here. Bell is in health, and unvaried good humor. But we are all in the agonies of packing. . . . I suppose by this hour to-morrow I shall be stuck in the chariot with my chin upon a band-box. I have prepared, however, another carriage for the abigail, and all the trumpery which our wives drag along with them."

Well, there follows a year or more of this coupled life—with what clashings we can imagine. Old Ralph Milbanke is not there to drawl through his after-dinner stories, and to intrude his restraining presence. The poet

finds things to watch about the clubs and the theatres—quite other than the stunted gooseberries that grew in his father-in-law's garden. Nothing is more sure than that the wilful audacities, and selfishness, and temper of the poet, put my lady's repose and dignities and perfection to an awful strain. Nor is it to be wondered at, if the mad and wild indiscretions of the husband should have provoked some quiet and galling counter indiscretions on the part of her ladyship.

It is alleged, for instance, that on an early occasion—and at the suggestion of a lady companion of the august mistress—there was an inspection of my lord's private papers, and a sending home to their writers of certain highly perfumed notelets found therein; and we can readily believe that when this instance of wifely zeal came to his lordship's knowledge he broke into a strain of remark which was *not* precisely that of the "Hebrew Melodies." Doubtless he carries away from such encounter a great reserve of bottled wrath—not so much against her ladyship personally, as against the stolid proprieties, the unbending scruples, the ladylike austerities, and the cool, elegant dowager-dignities she represents. Fancy a man who has put such soul as he has, and

such strength and hope and pride as he has, into those swift poems, which have taken his heart's blood to their making—fancy him, asked by the woman who has set out to widen his hopes and life by all the helps of wifehood, *"When—pray—he means to give up those versifying habits of his?"* No, I do not believe he resented this in language. I don't believe he argued the point; I don't believe he made defence of versifying habits; but I imagine that he regarded her with a dazed look, and an eye that saw more than it seemed to see —an eye that discerned broad shallows in her, where he had hoped for pellucid depths. I think he felt then—if never before—a premonition that their roads would not lie long together. And yet it gave him a shock—not altogether a pleasant one, we may be sure—when Sir Ralph, the father-in-law, to whose house she had gone on a visit, wrote him politely to the effect that—"she would never come back." Such things cannot be pleasant; at least, I should judge not.

And so, she thinks something more of marriage than as some highly reckoned conventionality—under whose cover bickerings may go on and spend their force, and the decent twin masks be always worn. And in him, we can

imagine lingering traces of a love for the feminine features in her—for the grace, the dignity, the sweet face, the modesties—but all closed over and buckled up, and stanched by the everlasting and all encompassing buckram that laces her in, and that has so little of the compensating instinctive softness and yieldingness which might hold him in leash and win him back. The woman who cannot—on occasions—put a weakness into her forgiveness, can never put a vital strength into her persuasion.

But they part, and part forever; the only wonder is they had not parted before; and still another wonder is, that there should have been zealous hunt for outside causes when so many are staringly apparent within the walls of home. I do not believe that Byron would have lived at peace with one woman in a thousand; I do not believe that Lady Byron would have lived at peace with one man in a hundred. The computation is largely in her favor; although it does not imply necessity for his condemnation as an utter brute. Even as he sails away from England—from which he is hunted with hue and cry, and to whose shores he is never again to return—he drops a farewell to her with such touches of feeling in it, that one wonders—and future readers always will won-

der—with what emotions the mother and his child may have read it:

"Fare thee well and if for ever,[1]
Still for ever—fare thee well!
Even tho' unforgiving—never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

. . . . . .

Love may sink by slow decay
But, by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away.
And when thou would'st solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say 'Father'
Though his care she must forego?
When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is prest,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee;
Think of him thy love has blessed.
Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me;

[1] This poem appeared about the middle of April, 1816. The final break in his relations with Lady Byron had occurred, probably, in early February of the same year. On December 10, 1815, his daughter Ada was born; and on April 25th, next ensuing, he sailed away from England forever. Byron insisted that the poem ("Fare thee well"), though written in sincerity, was published

THE FAREWELL

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know,
All my hopes where'er thou goest
Wither—yet, with thee they go.
Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now.
But 't is done, all words are idle;
Words from *me* are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way, without the will.
Fare thee well! thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Seared in heart and lone, and blighted—
More than this, I scarce can die."

I should have felt warranted in giving some intelligible account of the poet's infelicities at home were it only to lead up to this exhibit of his wondrous literary skill; but I find still stronger reasons in the fact that the hue and cry which followed upon his separation from his wife seemed to exalt the man to an insolent bravado, and a challenge of all restraint—under which his genius flamed up with new power, and with a blighting splendor.

against his inclinations, through the over-zeal of a friend.—*Moore's Life,* p. 526, vol. i.

EXILE

It was on the 25th of April, 1816 (he being then in his twenty-eighth year), that he bade England adieu forever, and among the tenderest of his leave-takings was that from his sister, who had vainly sought to make smooth the difficulties in his home, and who (until Lady Byron had fallen into the blindness of dotage) retained her utmost respect. I cannot forbear quoting two verses from a poem addressed to his devoted sister:

"Though the rock of my last hope is shivered
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is delivered
To pain—it shall *not* be its slave;
There is many a pang to pursue me;
They may crush—but they shall not contemn,
They may torture, but shall not subdue me,
'T is of *thee* that I think—not of them.

"From the wreck of the past, which hath perished,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherished
Deserved to be dearest of all;

In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste, there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee.*"

Never was a man pelted away from his native shores with more anathemas; never one in whose favor so few appealing voices were heard. It was not so much a memory of his satirical thrusts, as a jealousy begotten by his late extraordinary successes, which had alienated nearly the whole literary fraternity. Only Rogers, Moore, and Scott were among the better known ones who had forgiven his petulant verse, and were openly apologetic and friendly; while such kind wishers as Lady Holland and Lady Jersey were half afraid to make a show of their sympathies. Creditors, too, of that burdened estate of his, had pushed their executions one upon another—in those days when his torments were most galling—into what was yet called with poor significance his home; only his title of peer, Moore tells us, at one date saved him from prison.

Yet when he lands in Belgium, he travels—true to his old recklessness—like a prince; with body servants and physician, and a lumbering family coach, with its showy trappings. Wa-

terloo was fresh then, and the wreck and the blood, and the glory of it were all scored upon his brain, and shortly afterward by his fiery hand upon the poem we know so well, and which will carry that streaming war pennon in the face of other generations than ours. Then came the Rhine, with its castles and traditions, glittering afresh in the fresh stories that he wove; and after these his settlement for a while upon the borders of Lake Geneva—where, in some one of these talks of ours we found the studious Gibbon, under his acacia-trees, and where Rousseau left his footprints—never to be effaced—at Clarens and Meillerie. One would suppose that literature could do no more with such outlooks on lake and mountain, as seem to mock at language.

And yet the wonderful touch of Byron has kindled new interest in scenes on which the glowing periods of Rousseau had been lavished. Even the guide-books can none of them complete their record of the region without stealing descriptive gems from his verse; and his story of the *Prisoner of Chillon* will always—for you and for me—lurk in the shadows that lie under those white castle walls, and in the murmur of the waters that ebb and flow—gently as the poem—all round about their foundations.

I may mention that at the date of the Swiss visit, and under the influences and active co-operation of Madame de Staël—then a middle-aged and invalid lady residing at her country seat of Coppet, on the borders of Geneva Lake—Byron did make overtures for a reconciliation with his wife. They proved utterly without avail, even if they were not treated with scorn. And it is worthy of special note that while up to this date all mention of Lady Byron by the poet had been respectful, if not relenting and conciliatory—thereafter the vials of his wrath were opened, and his despairing scorn knew no bounds. Thus, in the "Incantation"—thrust into that uncanny work of *Manfred*—with which he was then at labor—he says:

"Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye,
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when, in that secret dread,
Thou hast turned around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot;
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal."

SHELLEY AND GODWIN

ANOTHER episode of Byron's Swiss life was his encounter there, for the first time, with the poet Shelley.[1] He, too, was under the ban, for reasons that I must briefly make known. Like his brother poet, Shelley was born to a prospective inheritance of title and of wealth. His father was a baronet, shrewd and calculating, and living by the harshest and baldest of old conventionalisms; this father had given a warm, brooding care to the estate left him by Sir Bysshe Shelley (the grandfather of the poet), who had an American bringing up—if not an American birth—in the town of Newark,[2] N. J. The boy poet had the advantages

[1] Percy Bysshe Shelley, b. 1792; d. (by drowning in Gulf of Spezia) 1822. *Queen Mab*, pub. 1821 (but privately printed 1813); *Alastor*, 1816; *Laon and Cythna* (afterward *Revolt of Islam*), 1818; *Adonais*, 1821. *Life*, by Mrs. Shelley, 1845; Hogg's *Life*, 1858; Rossetti's, 1870. Besides which there is biographical material, more or less full, by Forman, Trelawny, McCarthy, Leigh Hunt, Garnett, and Jeaffreson (*Real Shelley*). *Life* in *English Men of Letters*, by the late John Addington Symonds; and in 1886, Professor Dowden's work.

[2] Rossetti in *Ency. Britannica*, says, "in Christ Church, Newark"—as to which item (repeated by Dowden) there has been some American wonderment!

of a place at Eton[1]—not altogether a favorite there, it would seem; "passionate in his resistance to an injury, passionate in his love." He carried thence to Oxford a figure and a beauty of countenance that were almost effeminate; and yet he had a capacity for doubts and negations that was wondrously masculine. His scholarship was keen, but not tractable; he takes a wide range outside the established order of studies; he is a great and unstinted admirer of the French philosophers, and makes such audacious free-thinking challenge to the church dignitaries of Oxford that he is expelled—like something venomous. His father, too, gives him the cold shoulder at this crisis, and he drifts to London. There he contrives interviews with his sisters, who are in school at Clapham; and is decoyed into a marriage—before he is twenty—with a somewhat pretty and over-bold daughter of a coffee-house keeper, who has acted as a go-between in communications with his sisters. The prudent, conventional father is now down upon him with a vengeance.

But the boy has pluck under that handsome face of his. He sets out, with his wife—after

[1] July, 1804, to July, 1810; *Athenæum*, No. 3,006, June 1885.

sundry wanderings—to redeem Ireland; but they who are used to blunderbusses, undervalue Shelley's fine periods, and his fine face. He is some time in Wales too (the mountains there fastening on his thought and cropping out in after poems); he is in Edinboro', in York, in Keswick—making his obeisance to the great Southey (but coming to over-hate of him in after years). Meantime he has children. Sometimes money comes from the yielding father—sometimes none; he is abstemious; bread and water mostly his diet; his home is without order or thrift or invitingness—the lapses of the hoydenish girl-wife stinging him over and over and through and through.

But Shelley has read Godwin's *Political Justice*—one of those many fine schemes for the world's renovation, by tearing out and burning up most of the old furniture, which make their appearance periodically—and in virtue of his admiration of Godwin, Shelley counts him among the demi-gods of the heaven which he has conjured up. In reality Godwin[1] was an

[1] William Godwin, b. 1756; d. 1836. *Political Justice*, 1793; *Caleb Williams*, 1794. William Austen (author of *Peter Rugg*), in his *Letters from London*, 1802–3, describes a visit to Godwin at his cottage—Somerston; notices a portrait of "Mary" (Mrs. Shelley) hanging over the mantel.

oldish, rather clumsy, but astute and clever, dissenting minister, who had left preaching, and had not only written *Political Justice,* but novels—among them one called *Caleb Williams;* by which you will know him better—if you know him at all. This gave him great reputation in its time. There were critics who ranked him with, or above, Scott—even in fiction. This may tempt you to read *Caleb Williams;*[1] and if you read it—you will not forget it. It pinches the memory like a vice; much reading of it might, I should think, engender, in one of vivid imagination, such nightmare stories as *"Called Back"* or *"A Dark Day."*

But Mr. Godwin had a daughter, Mary (whose mother was that Mary Wollstonecraft, promoted now to a place amongst famous women), and our Shelley going to see Godwin, saw also the daughter Mary—many times over; and these two—having misty and mystic visions of a new order of ethics—ran away together.

It must be said, however, to the credit of

[1] Miss Martineau (p. 304, vol. ii., *Autobiography*), says that Godwin told her he wrote the first half of *Caleb Williams* in three months, and then stopped for six—finishing it in three more. "This pause," she says, "in the middle of a work so intense, seems to me a remarkable incident."

Shelley (if credit be the word to use), that when the first wife killed herself—as she did some eighteen months afterward[1] (whether from grief or other cause is doubtful)—he married Miss Godwin; and it was during the summer preceding this second marriage that Byron (1816) encountered Shelley on the shores of Lake Leman. Shelley had already written that wild screed of *Queen Mab* (privately printed, 1813), giving poetic emphasis to the scepticism of his Oxford days. He had published that dreamy poem of *Alastor*—himself its poet hero, as indeed he was in a large sense of every considerable poem he wrote. I cite a fragment of it, that you may see what waking and beguiling voice belonged to the young bard, who posed there on the Geneva lake beside the more masculine Byron. He has taken us into forest depths:

"One vast mass
Of mingling shade, whose brown magnificence
A narrow vale embosoms.

[1] Separation took place about the middle of June, 1814; she destroyed herself, November 10, 1816. At one time there had been an ugly rumor that she was untrue to him; and there is some reason to believe that Shelley once entertained this belief, but there is no adequate testimony to that end; Godwin's *dixit* should not count for very much. Dowden leaves the matter in doubt.

The pyramids
Of the tall cedar, overarching, frame
Most solemn domes within; and far below,
Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,
The ash and the acacia floating, hang
Tremulous and pale. Like restless serpents clothed
In rainbow and in fire, the parasites
Starred with ten thousand blossoms flowed around
The gray trunks; and as gamesome infants' eyes,
With gentle meanings and most innocent wiles
Fold their beams round the hearts of those that love,
These twine their tendrils with the wedded boughs.
. . . . the woven leaves
Make net-work of the dark blue lights of day
And the night's noontide clearness, mutable
As shapes in the weird clouds.
One darkest glen
Sends from its woods of musk-rose twined with jasmine
A soul-dissolving odor, to invite
To some more lovely mystery. Through the dell
Silence and twilight here, twin sisters, keep
Their noonday watch, and sail among the shades
Like vaporous shapes half seen."

And such mysteries and vaporous shapes run through all his poetic world. He wanders, with

that rarely fine gift of rhythmic speech, as wide away from the compact sordid world—upon which Byron always sets foot with a ringing tread—as ever Spenser in his chase of rainbow creations. Yet there were penetrative sinuous influences about that young poet—defiant of law and wrapt in his pursuit of mysteries—which may well have given foreign touches of color to Byron's *Manfred* or to his *Prometheus*. At any rate, these two souls lay quietly for a time, warped together—like two vessels windbound under mountain shelter.

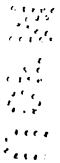
BYRON IN ITALY

BYRON next goes southward, to riotous life in Venice; where—whether in tradesmen's houses or in palaces upon the Grand Canal, or in country villas upon the Euganean hills—he defies priests and traditions, and order, and law, and decency.

To this period belongs, probably, the conception, if not the execution, of many of those dramas[1]—as non-playable as ever those of

[1] I am reminded that Macready's impersonation of Werner was a noted and successful one. *Sardanapalus* and the *Two Foscari* enlisted also the fervor of this actor's dramatic indorsement. But these all—needed a Macready.

Lord Byron
From the painting by W. E. West made at Pisa, 1822



Tennyson—unequal, too, but with passages scattered here and there of great beauty; masterly aggregation of words smoking with passion, and full of such bullet-like force of expression as only he could command; but there is no adequate blending of parts to make either stately or well-harmonized march of events toward large and definite issues.

Out of the Venetian welter came, too, the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* and the opening parts of *Don Juan.* The mocking, rollicking, marvellous *Vision of Judgment,* whose daring license staggered even Murray and Moore, and which scarified poor Southey, belongs to a later phase of his Italian career. It is angry and bitter—and has an impish laughter in it—of a sort which our friend Robert Ingersoll might write, if his genius ran to poetry. *Cain* had been of a bolder tone—perhaps loftier; with much of the argument that Milton puts into the mouth of Satan, amplified and rounded, and the whole illuminated by passages of wonderful poetic beauty.

His scepticism, if not so out-spoken and full of plump negatives as that of Shelley, is far more mocking and bitter. If Shelley was rich in negations—so far as relates to orthodox belief—he was also rich in dim, shadowy concep-

tions of a mysterious eternal region, with faith and love reigning in it—toward which in his highest range of poetic effusion he makes approaches with an awed and a tremulous step. But with Byron—even where his words carry full theistic beliefs—the awe and the tremulous approaches are wanting.

SHELLEY AGAIN

SHELLEY went back from Switzerland to a home for a year or more, beyond Windsor, near to Bisham—amid some of the loveliest country that borders upon the Thames. Here he wrote that strange poem of *Laon and Cythna* (or *Revolt of Islam,* as it was called on its re-issue), which, so far as one can gather meaning from its redundant and cumulated billows of rich, poetic language, tells how a nation was kindled to freedom by the strenuous outcry of some young poet-prophet—how he seems to win, and his enemies become like smoking flax—how the dreadful fates that beset us, and crowd all worldly courses from their best outcome, did at last trample him down; not him only, but the one dearest to him —who is a willing victim—and bears him off into the shades of night. Throughout, Laon

the Victim is the poet's very self; and the very self appears again—with what seems to the cautious, world-wise reader a curious indiscretion—in the pretty jumping metre of "Rosalind and Helen":—

"Joyous he was; and hope and peace
On all who heard him did abide,
Raining like dew from his sweet talk,
As where the evening star may walk
Along the brink of the gloomy seas,
Liquid mists of splendid quiver.
His very gestures touched to tears
The unpersuaded tyrant, never
So moved before. . . .
Men wondered, and some sneered, to see
One sow what he could never reap;
For he is rich, they said, and young,
And might drink from the depths of luxury.
If he seeks Fame, Fame never crowned
The champion of a trampled creed;
If he seeks Power, Power is enthroned
'Mid ancient rights and wrongs, to feed
Which hungry wolves with praise and spoil,
Those who would sit near Power must toil."

It was in 1818, four years before his death, that Shelley sailed away from English shores forever. There was not much to hold him

there; those children of the Westbrook mother he cannot know or guide.[1] The Chancellor of England has decided that question against him; and Law, which he has defied, has wrought him this great pain; nay, he has wild, imaginary fears, too, that some Lord Chancellor, weaving toils in that web of orderly British custom, may put bonds on these other and younger children of the Godwin blood. Nor is it strange that a world of more reasonable motives should urge this subtle poet—whose head is carried of purpose, and by love, among the clouds—to turn his back on that grimy, matter-of-fact England, and set his face toward those southern regions where Art makes daily food, and where he may trail his robes without the chafings of law or custom. But do not let me convey the impression that Shelley then or ever lived day by day wantonly lawless, or doing violence to old-fashioned proprieties; drunkenness was always a stranger to him; to that new household—into which he had been grafted by

[1]Very full account of the Chancery proceedings in respect to children of Shelley may be found in Professor Dowden's biography. By this it would appear that by decision of Lord Eldon (July 25, 1818) Shelley was allowed to see his children twelve times a year—if in the presence of their regularly appointed guardians (Dr. and Mrs. Hume).

Godwinian ethics—he is normally true; he would, if it were possible, bring into the lap of his charities those other estrays from whom the law divides him; his generosities are of the noblest and fullest; he even entertains at one time the singular caprice of "taking orders," as if the author of *Queen Mab* could hold a vicarage! It opens, he said, so many ways of doing kindly things, of making hearts joyful; and—for doctrine, one can always preach Charity! With rare exceptions, it is only in his mental attitudes and forays that he oversteps the metes and bounds of the every-day moralities around him. Few poets, even of that time, can or do so measure him as to enjoy him or to give him joy. Leigh Hunt is gracious and kindly; but there are no winged sandals on his feet which can carry him into regions where Shelley walks. Southey is stark unbeliever in the mystic fields where Shelley grazes. Wordsworth is conquered by the Art, but has melancholy doubts of the soul that seems caught and hindered in the meshes of its own craftsmanship. Landor, of a certainty, has detected with his keen insight the high faculties that run rampant under the mazes of the new poet's language; but Landor, too, is in exile—driven hither and thither by the same lack of steady

home affinities which has overset and embroiled the domesticities of the younger poet.

JOHN KEATS

YET another singer of these days, in most earnest sympathy with the singing moods of Shelley—for whom I can have only a word now, was John Keats;[1] born within the limits of London smoke, and less than three-quarters of a mile from London Bridge—knowing in his boy days only the humblest, work-a-day ranges of life; getting some good Latinity and other schooling out of a Mr. Clarke (of the Cowden Clarke family)—reading Virgil with him, but no Greek. And yet the lad, who never read Homer save in Chapman, when he comes to write, as he does in extreme youth, crowds his wonderful lines with the delicate trills and warblings which might have broken out straight from Helicon—with a susurrus from the Bees of Hymettus. This makes a good argument—so far as it reaches—in disproof of the averments of those who believe that, for

[1] John Keats, b. 1795; d. 1821. First "collected" *Poems,* 1817; *Endymion,* 1818; second volume of collected *Poems,* 1820; *Life and Letters*—Lord Houghton (Milnes), 1848.

conquest of Attic felicities of expression, the Greek vocables must needs be torn forth root by root, and stretched to dry upon our skulls.

He published *Endymion* in the very year when Shelley set off on his final voyagings—a gushing, wavy, wandering poem, intermeshed with flowers and greenery (which he lavishes), and with fairy golden things in it and careering butterflies; with some bony under-structure of Greek fable—loose and vague—and serving only as the caulking pins to hold together the rich, sensuous sway, and the temper and roll of his language.

I must snatch one little bit from that book of *Endymion,* were it only to show you what music was breaking out in unexpected quarters from that fact-ridden England, within sound of the murmurs of the Thames, when Shelley was sailing away:—

"On every morrow are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching; yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such—the sun, the moon,
Trees—old and young, sprouting a shady boon

For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms;
And such, too, is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read."

I might cite page on page from Keats, and yet hold your attention; there is something so beguiling in his witching words; and his pictures are finished—with only one or two or three dashes of his pencil. Thus we come upon—

"Swelling downs, where sweet air stirs
Blue harebells lightly, and where prickly furze
Buds lavish gold."

And again our ear is caught with—

"Rustle of the reapéd corn,
And sweet birds antheming the morn."

Well, this young master of song goes to Italy, too—not driven, like Byron, by hue and cry, or like Shelley, restless for change (from Chancellor's courts) and for wider horizons—

but running from the disease which has firm grip upon him, and which some three years after Shelley's going kills the poet of the *Endymion* at Rome. His ashes lie in the Protestant burial-ground there—under the shadow of the pyramid of Caius Cestius. Every literary traveller goes to see the grave, and to spell out the words he wanted inscribed there:

"Here lies one whose name was writ in water."

Upon that death, Shelley, then living in Pisa, blazed out in the *Adonais*—the poem making, with the *Lycidas* of Milton, and the *In Memoriam* of Tennyson, a triplet of laurel garlands, whose leaves will never fade. Yet those of Shelley have a cold rustle in them—shine as they may:—

"Oh, weep for Adonais—he is dead!
Wake, melancholy mother, wake and weep!
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep
Like his—a mute and uncomplaining sleep.
For he is gone where all things wise and fair
Descend. Oh, dream not that the amorous deep

Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice and laughs at our
despair.

"Oh, weep for Adonais! The quick dreams,
The passion-winged ministers of thought
Who were his flocks, whom near the living
streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he
taught
The Love which was its music, wander not—
Wander no more from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there whence they sprung; and
mourn their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet
pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home
again."

The weak place in this impassioned commemorative poem lies in its waste of fire upon the heads of those British critics, who—as flimsy, pathetic legends used to run—slew the poet by their savagery. Keats did not range among giants; but he was far too strong a man to die of the gibes of the *Quarterly,* or the jeers of *Blackwood.* Not this; but all along, throughout his weary life—even amid the high airs of Hampstead, where nightingales sang—he sang, too,—

DEATH OF KEATS

"I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a muséd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath."[1]

BURIED IN ROME

KEATS died in 1821. In that year Shelley was living between Lirici, on the gulf of Spezia, and Pisa. While in this latter city, he was planted for a time at the old Lanfranchi palace, where in the following season very much at the instance and urgence of Shelley, Leigh Hunt came with his six riotous young children, and sometimes made a din—that was new to Byron and most worrisome—in the court of the Lanfranchi house. Out of this Hunt fraternizing and co-working (forecast by the kindly Shelley) was to be built up the success of that famous "Liberal" Journal, dear to the hearts of Shelley and Hunt, of which I have already spoken, and which had disastrous failure; out of this aggregation of disorderly poetic elements grew also the squabbles that gave such harsh color to the *Reminiscences* of Leigh Hunt.[2]

[1] "Ode to a Nightingale," vi.

[2] In letter 573, to Murray (Halleck Col., date of Genoa, November, 1822), Byron says: "I see somebody repre-

But other and graver disaster was impending. Shelley loved the sea, and carried with him to the water the same reckless daring which he put into his verse. Upon a summer day of July, 1822, he went with a friend and one boatman for a sail upon the bay of Spezia, not heeding some cautions that had been dropped by old seamen, who had seen portents of a storm; and his boat sailed away into the covert of the clouds. Next day there were no tidings, nor the next, nor the next. Finally wreck and bodies came to the shore.

Trelawney, Byron's friend, tells a grim story of it all—how the dismal truth was carried to the widowed wife, how the body of the drowned poet was burned upon the shore, with heathen libations of oil and wine; how Byron and Hunt both were present at the weird funeral—the blue Mediterranean lapping peacefully upon the beach and the black smoke lifting in great clouds from the pyre and throwing lurid shadows over the silent company. The burial—such as there was of it—took place in that same Protestant graveyard at Rome—just out of the Porta San Paolo—where we were just now witnesses at the burial of Keats.

sents the Hunts and Mrs. Shelley as living in my house; it is a falsehood. . . . I do not see them twice a month."

Shelley made many friendships, and lasting ones. He was wonderfully generous; he visited the sick; he helped the needy; putting himself often into grievous straits for means to give quickly. As he was fine of figure and of feature, so his voice was fine, delicate, penetrative, yet in moments of great excitement rising to a shrillness that spoiled melody and rasped the ear; so his finer generosities and kindnesses sometimes passed into a rasping indifference or even cruelty toward those nearest him, he feeling that first Westbrook *mesalliance,* on occasions, like a torture—specially when the presence of the tyrannic, coarse, aggravating sister-in-law was like a poisonous irritant; he—under the teachings of a conscientious father, in his young days—was scarce more than half responsible for his wry life; running to badnesses —on occasions—under good impulses; perhaps marrying that first wife because she wanted to marry him; and quitting her—well—because "she did n't care." Intellectually, as well as morally, he was pagan; seeing things in their simplest aspects, and so dealing with them; intense, passionate, borne away in tempests of quick decision, whose grounds he cannot fathom; always beating his wings against the cagements that hem us in; eager to look into

those depths where light is blinding and will not let us look; seeming at times to measure by some sudden reach of soul what is immeasurable; but under the vain uplifts, always reverent, with a dim hope shining fitfully; contemptuous of harassing creeds or any jugglery of forms—of whatever splendid fashionings of mere material, whether robes or rites—and yearning to solve by some strong, swift flight of imagination what is insoluble. There are many reverent steps that go to that little Protestant cemetery—an English greenery upon the borders of the Roman Campagna—where the ashes of Shelley rest and where myrtles grow. And from its neighborhood, between Mount Aventine and the Janiculan heights, one may see reaches of the gleaming Tiber, and the great dome of St. Peter's lifting against the northern sky, like another tomb, its cross almost hidden in the gray distance.

PISA AND DON JUAN

No such friendship as that whose gleams have shot athwart these latter pages could have been kindled by Byron. No "Adonais" could have been writ for him; he could have melted into no "Adonais" for another; old pirate blood,

seething in him, forbade. No wonder he chafed at Hunt's squalling children in the Lanfranchi palace; *that* literary partnership finds quick dissolution. He sees on rare occasions an old English friend—he, who has so few! Yet he is in no mood to make new friends. The lambent flames of the Guiccioli romance hover and play about him, making the only counterfeit of a real home which he has ever known. The proud, independent, audacious, lawless living that has been his so long, whether the early charms lie in it or no—he still clings by. His pen has its old force, and the words spin from it in fiery lines; but to pluck the flowers worth the seeking, which he plants in them now, one must go over quaking bogs, and through ways of foulness.

The *Childe Harold* has been brought to its conclusion long before; its cantos, here and there splendidly ablaze with Nature—its storms, its shadows, its serenities; and the sentiment—now morbid, now jubilant—is always his own, though it beguiles with honeyed sounds, or stabs like a knife.

There have been a multitude of lesser poems, and of dramas which have had their inception and their finish on that wild Continental holiday—beginning on *Lac Leman* and ending at

Pisa and Genoa; but his real selfhood—whether of mind or passion—seems to me to come out plainer and sharper in the *Don Juan* than elsewhere. There may not be lifts in it which rise to the romantic levels of the "Pilgrimage"; there may be lack of those interpolated bits of passion, of gloom, of melancholy, which break into the earlier poem. But there is the blaze and crackle of his own mad march of flame; the soot, the cinders, the heat, the wide-spread ashes, and unrest of those fires which burned in him from the beginning were there, and devastated all the virginal purities of his youth (if indeed there were any!) and welded his satanic and his poetic qualities into that seamy, shining, wonderful residue of dirty scoriæ, and of brilliant phosphorescence, which we call *Don Juan*. From a mere literary point of view there are trails of doggerel in it, which the poet was too indolent to mend, and too proud to exclude. Nor can it ever be done; a revised Byron would be not only a Byron emasculated, but decapitated and devastated. 'T would lack the links that tie it to the humanities which coil and writhe tortuously all up and down his pages. His faults of prosody, or of ethics, or of facts—his welter, at intervals, through a barren splendor of words—are all

typical of that fierce, proud, ungovernable, unconventional nature. This leopard will and should carry all his spots. We cannot shrive the man; no chanters or churches can do this; he disdains to be shriven at human hands, or, it would seem, any other hands. The impact of that strong, vigorous nature—through his poems—brings, to the average reader, a sense of force, of brilliancy, of personality, of humanity (if gone astray), which exhilarates, which dashes away a thousand wordy memories of wordy verses, and puts in their place palpitating phrases that throb with life. An infinite capability for eloquent verse; an infinite capability for badnesses! We cannot root out the satanry from the man, or his books, any more than we can root out Lucifer from Milton's Eden. But we can lament both, and, if need be, fight them.

Whether closer British influence (which usually smote upon him, like sleet on glass)—even of that "Ancient Oratory" of Annesley—would have served to whiten his tracks, who shall say? Long ago he had gone out from them, and from parish church and sermon; his hymns were the *Ranz des Vaches* on the heights of the *Dent de Jaman* and the preachments he heard were the mellowed tones of

convent bells—filtering through forest boughs —maybe upon the ear of some helpless Allegra, scathed by birth-marks of a sin that is not her own—conning her beads, and listening and praying!

MISSOLONGHI

It was in 1823, when he was living in Genoa—whither he had gone from Pisa (and before this, Ravenna)—that his sympathies were awakened in behalf of the Greeks, who since 1820 had been in revolt against their Turkish taskmasters. He had been already enrolled with those Carbonari—the forerunners of the Mazzinis and the Garibaldis—who had labored in vain for the independence and unity of Italy; and in many a burst of his impassioned song he had showered welcoming praises upon a Greece that should be free, and with equal passion attuned his verse to the lament—that

"Freedom found no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, armed and undefiled."

How much all this was real and how much only the romanticism of the poet, was now to be proven. And it was certainly with a business-like air that he cut short his little *agaceries* with the Lady Blessington, and pleasant dalli-

ance with the Guiccioli, for a rallying of all his forces—moneyed or other—in the service of that cause for which the brave Marco Bozzaris had fallen, fighting, only three months before. It was in July that he embarked at Genoa for Greece—in a brig which he had chartered, and which took guns and ammunition and $40,000 of his own procurement, with a retinue of attendants—including his trusty Fletcher—besides his friends Trelawney and the Count Gamba. They skirted the west coast of Italy, catching sight of Elba—then famous for its Napoleonic associations—and of Stromboli, whose lurid blaze, reflected upon the sea, startled the admiring poet to a hinted promise—that those fires should upon some near day reek on the pages of a Fifth Canto of *Childe Harold.*

Mediterranean ships were slow sailers in those days, and it was not until August that they arrived and disembarked at Cephalonia—an island near to the outlet of the Gulf of Corinth, and lying due east from the Straits of Messina. There was a boisterous welcome to the generous and eloquent peer of England; but it was a welcome that showed factional discords. Only across a mile or two of water lay the Isle of Ithaca, full of vague, Homeric traditions, which under other conditions he would

have been delighted to follow up; but the torturing perplexities about the distribution of moneys or ammunition, the jealousies of quarrelsome chieftains, the ugly watch over drafts and bills of exchange, and the griping exactions of local money-changers, made all Homeric fancies or memories drift away with the scuds of wind that blew athwart the Ionian seas.

He battled bravely with the cumulating difficulties—sometimes maddened to regret—other times lifted to enthusiasm by the cordial greeting of such a chieftain as Mavrocordatos, or the street cheers of a band of Suliotes. So months passed, until he embarked again, in equipage of his own, with his own fittings, for Missolonghi, where final measures were to be taken. Meantime he is paying for his ships, paying for his Suliotes, paying for delays, and beset by rival chieftains for his interest, or his stimulating presence, or his more stimulating moneys. On this new but short sea venture he barely escapes capture by a Turkish frigate—is badly piloted among the rocky islets which stud the shores; suffers grievous exposure—coming at last, wearied and weakened, to a new harborage, where welcomes are vociferous, but still wofully discordant. He labors wearily to smooth the troubled waters, his old, splendid

allegiance to a free and united Greece suffering grievous quakes, and doubts; and when after months of alternating turbulence and rest there seems promise of positive action, he is smitten by the fever of those low coasts—aggravated by his always wanton exposures. The attack is as sudden as a shot from a gun—under which he staggers and falls, writhing with pain, and I know not what convulsional agonies.

There is undertaken an Italian regimen of cupping and leeching about the brow and temples, from which the bleeding is obstinate, and again and again renewed. But he rallies; attendants are assiduous in their care. Within a day or two he has recovered much of the old *vires vitæ,* when on a sudden there is an alarm; a band of mutinous Suliotes, arms in hand, break into his lordship's apartments, madly urging some trumpery claim for back-pay. Whereupon Byron—showing the old savagery of his ancestors—leaps from his bed, seizes whatever weapon is at hand, and gory—with his bandaged head still trickling blood—he confronts the mutineers; his strength for the moment is all his own again, and they are cowered into submission, their yataghans clinking as they drop to the tiled flooring of his room.

'T was a scene for Benjamin West to have painted in the spirit of Death on the Pale Horse, or for some later artist—loving bloody "impressions." However, peace is established. Quiet reigns once more (we count by days only, now). There is a goodly scheme for attack upon the fortress which guards the Gulf of Lepanto (Corinth); the time is set; the guards are ready; the Suliotes are under bidding; the chieftains are (for once) agreed, when, on the 18th, he falters, sinks, murmurs some last words—"Ada—daughter—love—Augusta—" barely caught; doubtfully caught; but it is all—and the poet of *Childe Harold* is gone, and that turbulent, brilliant career hushed in night.

It was on April 19, 1824, that he died. His body was taken home for burial. I said *home;* 't were better to have said to England, to the family vault, in which his mother had been laid; and at a later day, his daughter, Ada, was buried there beside him, in the old Hucknall-Torkard church. The building is heavy and bald, without the winning picturesqueness that belongs to so many old country churches of Yorkshire. The beatitudes that are intoned under its timbered arch are not born of any rural beatitudes in the surroundings. The

town is small, straggly, bricky,[1] and neither church nor hamlet nor neighbors' houses are suffused with those softened tints which verdure, and nice keeping, and mellow sunshine give to so many villages of southern England. Hucknall-Torkard is half way between Nottingham and Newstead, and lies upon that northern road which pushes past Annesley into the region of woods and parks where Sherwood forest once flung its shadows along the aisles in which the bugle notes of master Robin Hood woke the echoes.

But Hucknall-Torkard church is bald and tame. Mr. Winter, in his pleasant, descriptive sketch,[2] does indeed give a certain glow to the "grim" tower, and many a delightful touch to the gray surroundings; but even he would inhibit the pressure of the noisy market-folk against the churchyard walls, and their rollicking guffaw. And yet, somehow, the memory of Byron does not seem to me to mate well with either home or church quietudes, and their serenities. Is it not proper and fitting after all that the clangor of a rebellious and fitful world

[1] Professor Hoppin, in his honest and entertaining *Old England,* speaks of it (p. 258) as "a dull, dirty village," and—of the church—as "most forlorn."

[2] *Gray Days and Gold;* chapter viii. Macmillan, 1896.

should voice itself near such a grave? Old mossy and ivied towers in which church bells are a-chime, and near trees where rooks are cawing with home-sounds, do not marry happily with our memories of Byron.

Best of all if he had been given burial where his heart lies, in that Ætolian country, upon some shaggy fore-land from which could have been seen—one way, Ithaca and the Ionian seas, and to the southward, across the Straits of Lepanto, the woody depths of the Morea, far as Arcadia.

But there is no mending the matter now; he lies beside his harsh Gordon mother in the middle of the flat country of stockings, lace curtains, and collieries.

Another poet, William Lisle Bowles, in a quaint sonnet has versed this Gordon mother's imaginary welcome to her dead son:—

"Could that mother speak,
In thrilling, but with hollow accent weak,
She thus might give the welcome of the dead:
'Here rest, my son, with me; the dream is fled;
The motley mask, and the great stir is o'er.
Welcome to me, and to this silent bed,
Where deep forgetfulness succeeds the roar
Of life, and fretting passions waste the heart no more!'"

CHAPTER VII

FOR many a page now we have spoken intermittently of that extraordinary man and poet—full of power and full of passion, both uncontrolled—whose surroundings we found in that pleasantly undulating Nottingham country where Newstead Abbey piled above its lawn and its silent tarns—half a ruin, and half a home.[1] Nor did Byron ever know a home which showed no ruin—nor ever know a ruin, into which his verse did not nestle as into a home.

We traced him from the keeping of that passionate mother—who smote him through and through with her own wrathful spirit—to the days when he uttered the "Idle" songs—coined in the courts of Cambridge—and to those quick succeeding days, when his mad verse maddened English bards and Scotch reviewers. Then came the passages of love—with Mary Cha-

[1] This relates, of course, to the condition of the Abbey in the days of Byron's childhood. Colonel Wildman, a distinguished officer in the Peninsular War, who succeeded to the ownership (by purchase) about 1817, expended very large sums upon such judicious improvements as took away its old look of desolation.

worth, which was real and vain; with a Milbanke, which was a mockery and ended in worse than mockery; all these experiences whetting the edge of that sword of song with which he carved a road of romance for thousands of after journeymen to travel, through the old Iberian Peninsula, and the vales of Thessaly. Then there was the turning away, in rage, from the shores of England, the episode with the Shelley household on the borders of Lake Leman, with its record of "crag-splitting" storms and sunny siestas; and such enduring memorials as the ghastly *Frankenstein* of Mrs. Shelley, the Third Canto of *Childe Harold,* and the child-name of—Allegra.

Next came Venice, where the waves lapped murmurously upon the door-steps of the palaces which "Mi-lord" made noisy with his audacious revelry. To this succeeded the long stay at Ravenna, with its pacifying and lingering, reposeful reach of an attachment, which was beautiful in its sincerity, but as lawless as his life. After Ravenna came Pisa with its Hunt-Lanfranchi coruscations of spleen, and its weird interlude of the burning of the body of his poor friend Shelley upon the Mediterranean shores. Song, and drama, and tender verselets, and bagnio-tainted pictures of Don

Juan, gleamed with fervid intensity through the interstices of this Italian life; but they all came to a sudden stay when he sailed for Greece, and with a generosity as strong as his wilder passions, flung away his fortune and his life in that vortex of Suliote strifes and deadly miasmas, which was centred amid the swamp-lands of Missolonghi.

The Cretans of to-day (1897), and the men of Thessaly, and of the Morea, and the Albanians all, may find a lift of their ambitions and a spur to their courage in Byron's sacrifice to their old struggle for liberty, and in his magnificent outburst of patriotic song. So, too, those who love real poetry will never cease to admire his subtle turns of thought, and his superb command of all the resources of language. But the households are few in which his name will be revered as an apostle of those cheering altitudes of thought which encourage high endeavor, or of those tenderer humanities which spur to kindly deeds, and give their glow to the atmosphere of homes.

KING WILLIAM'S TIME

THE last figure that we dealt with among England's kings was that bluff, vulgar-toned sailor, William IV., whom even the street-folk criti-

cise, because he spat from his carriage window when driving on some State ceremonial.[1] Nor was this the worst of his coarseness; he swore —with great ease and pungency. He forgot his dignity; he insulted his ministers; he gave to Queen Adelaide, who survived him many years as dowager, many most uncomfortable half-hours; and if he read the new sea-stories of Captain Marryat—though he read very little —I suspect he loved more the spicier condiments of *Peregrine Pickle* and of *Tom Jones*.

Yet during the period of his short reign—scarce seven years—events happened—some through his slow helpfulness, and none suffering grievously from his obstructiveness—which gave new and brighter color to the political development and to the literary growth of England. There was, for instance, the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832 (of which I have already spoken, in connection with Sydney Smith)—not indeed accomplishing all its friends had hoped; not inaugurating a political millennium; not doing away with the harsh frictions of state-craft; no reforms ever do or can; but broadening the outlook and range of

[1] *Croker Papers*, chapter xviii. Closing of Session of 1833. Croker would have spoken more gently of him in those latter days, when the king turned his back on Reformers.

all publicists, and stirring quiet thinkers into aggressive and kindling and hopeful speech. Very shortly after this followed the establishment of that old society for the "Diffusion of Useful Knowledge" which came soon to the out-put—under the editorship of Charles Knight—of the *Penny Cyclopædia* and the *Penny Magazine.*[1]

I recall distinctly the delight with which—as boys—we lingered over the pictured pages of that magazine—the great forerunner of all of our illustrated monthlies.

To the same period belong those *Tracts for the Times,* in which John Keble, the honored author of the *Christian Year,* came to new notice, while his associates, Dr. Pusey and Cardinal Newman, gave utterance to speech which is not without reverberating echoes, even now. Nor was it long after this date that British journalism received a great lift, and a great broadening of its forces, by a reduction of the stamp-tax—largely due to the efforts of Bulwer Lytton—whereby British newspapers increased their circulation, within two years, by 20,000,000 annually.[2]

[1] The *Penny Magazine* appeared first in 1832; the *Cyclopædia* in the following year.

[2] The reduction of tax from *4d.* to *1d.* took place in 1836.

All these things had come about in the reign of William IV.; but to none of them had he given any enthusiastic approval, or any such urgence of attention as would have dislocated a single one of his royal dinners.

In 1837 he died—not very largely sighed over; least of all by that sister-in-law, the Duchess of Kent, whom he had hated for her starched proprieties, whom he had insulted again and again, and who now, in her palace of Kensington, prepared her daughter Victoria for her entrance upon the sovereignty.

HER MAJESTY VICTORIA

THE girl was only eighteen—well taught, discreet, and modest. Greville tells us that she was consumed with blushes when her uncles of Sussex and of Cumberland came, with the royal council, to kneel before her, and to kiss her hand in token of the new allegiance.

The old king had died at two o'clock of the morning; and by eleven o'clock on the same day the duties of royalty had begun for the young queen, in receiving the great officers of state. Among the others she meets on that first regal day in Kensington Palace, are Lansdowne, the fidgety Lord Brougham, the courtly Sir Robert Peel, and the spare, trim-looking

old Duke of Wellington, who is charmed by her gracious manner, and by her self-control and dignity. He said he could not have been more proud of her if she had been his own daughter.

Nearer to the young queen than all these—by old ties of friendship, that always remained unshaken—was the suave and accomplished Lord Melbourne—First Minister—who has prepared the queen's little speech for her, which she reads with charming self-possession; to him, too, she looks for approval and instruction in all her progress through the new ceremonials of Court, and the ordering of a royal household. And Melbourne is admirably suited to that task; he was not a great statesman; was never an orator, but possessed of all the arts of conciliation—adroit and full of tact, yet kindly, sympathetic, and winning. Not by any means a man beyond reproach in his private life, but bringing to those new offices of political guardianship to the young queen only the soundest good-sense and the wisest of advice—thus inspiring in her a trust that was never forfeited.

Indeed, it was under Melbourne's encouragements, and his stimulative commendation (if stimulus were needed), that the young princess

formed shortly after that marriage relation which proved altogether a happy one—giving to England and to the world shining proof that righteous domesticities were not altogether clean gone from royal houses. And if the good motherly rulings have not had their best issues with some of the male members of the family, can we not match these wry tendencies with those fastening upon the boys of well-ordered households all around us? It is not in royal circles only that his satanic majesty makes friends of nice boys, when the girls escape him—or seem to!

Well, I have gone back to that old palace of Kensington, which still, with its mossy brick walls, in the west of London, baffles the years, and the fogs—the same palace where we went to find William III. dying, and the gracious Queen Anne too; and where now the Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise have their home. I have taken you again there to see how the young Victoria bore herself at the news of her accession—with the great councillors of the kingdom about her—not alone because those whom we shall bring to the front, in this closing chapter, have wrought during her reign; but because, furthermore, she with her household have been encouragers and patrons of both

letters and of art in many most helpful ways; and yet, again, because this queen, who has within this twelvemonth (1897) made her new speech to Parliament—sixty years after that first little speech at Kensington—is herself, in virtue of certain modest book-making, to be enrolled with all courtesy in the Guild of Letters. And though the high-stepping critics may be inclined to question the literary judgment or the scrupulous finish of her book-work, we cannot, I think, deny to it a thoroughly humane tone, and a tender realism. We greet her not only by reason of her queenship proper, but for that larger sovereignty of womanhood and of motherhood which she has always dignified and adorned.

I once caught such glimpse of her—as strangers may—in the flush of her early wedded life; not beautiful surely, but comely, kindly, and radiant, in the enjoyment of—what is so rare with sovereigns—a happy home-life; and again I came upon other sight of her eight years later, when the prince was a rollicking boy, and the princess a blooming maiden; these and lesser rosy-cheeked ones were taking the air on the terrace at Windsor, almost in the shadow of the great keep, which has frowned there since the days of Edward III.

MACAULAY

IN the early days of Queen Victoria's reign—when Sir Robert Peel was winning his way to the proud position he later held—when American and English politicians were getting into the toils of the "Maine Boundary" dispute (afterward settled by Ashburton and Webster), and when the Countess of Blessington was making "Gore House" lively with her little suppers, and the banker Rogers entertaining all *beaux esprits* at his home near the Green Park, there may have been found as guest at one of the banker's famous breakfasts—somewhere we will say in the year 1838—a man, well-preserved, still under forty—with a shaggy brow, with clothes very likely ill-adjusted and ill-fitting, and with gloves which are never buttoned—who has just come back from India, where he has held lucrative official position. He is cogitating, it is said, a history of England, and his talk has a fulness and richness that seem inexhaustible.

You know to whom I must refer—Thomas Babington Macaulay[1]—not a new man at Rog-

[1]Thomas Babington Macaulay, b. 1800; d. 1859. *History of England,* 1848–55–61. *Lays of Ancient Rome,* 1842. His *Essays* (published in America), 1840. Com-

ers's table, not a new man to bookish people; for he had won his honors in literature, especially by a first paper on Milton, published in the year 1825 in the *Edinburgh Review*. This bore a new stamp and had qualities that could not be overlooked. There are scores of us who read that paper for the first time in the impressionable days of youth, who are carried back now by the mere mention of it to the times of the old Puritan poet.

"We can almost fancy that we are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hangings; that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day; that we are reading in the lines of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his affliction!"

Macaulay came of good old Scotch stock—his forefathers counting up patriarchal families in Coll and Inverary; but his father, Zachary Macaulay, well known for his anti-slavery action and influence, and for his association with Wilberforce, married an English Quaker girl from Bristol—said to have been a *protégée*

plete *Works*, London, 8 vols., 1866. *Life*, by Trevelyan, 1876.

of our old friend, Mistress Hannah More. Of this marriage was born, in 1800, at the charming country house of an aunt, named Babington, in the pleasant county of Leicestershire, the future historian.

The father's first London home was near by Lombard Street, where he managed an African agency under the firm name of Macaulay & Babington; and the baby Macaulay used to be wheeled into an open square near by, for the enjoyment of such winter's sunshine as fell there at far-away intervals. His boyish memories, however, belonged to a later home at Clapham, then a suburban village. There, was his first schooling, and there he budded out—to the wonderment of all his father's guests—into young poems and the drollest of precocious talk. His pleasant biographer (Trevelyan) tells of a visit the bright boy made at Strawberry Hill—Walpole's old show-place. There was a spilling of hot drink of some sort, during the visitation, which came near to scalding the lad; and when the sympathizing hostess asked after his suffering: "Thank you, madam," said he, "the agony is abated!" The story is delightfully credible; and so are other pleasant ones of his reciting some of his doggerel verses to Hannah More and getting a gracious

and approving nod of her gray curls and of her mob-cap.

At Cambridge, where he went at the usual student age, he studied what he would, and discarded what he would—as he did all through his life. For mathematics he had a distinguished repugnance, then and always; and if brought to task by them in those student days—trying hard to twist their certainties into probabilities, and so make them subject to that world of "ifs and buts" which he loved to start buzzing about the ears of those who loved the exact sciences better than he. He missed thus some of the University honors, it is true; yet, up and down in those Cambridge coteries he was a man looked for, and listened to, eagerly and bravely applauded. Certain scholastic honors, too, he did reap, in spite of his lunges outside the traces; there was a medal for his poem of *Pompeii;* and a Fellowship, at last, which gave him a needed, though small income —his father's Afric business having proved a failure, and no home moneys coming to him thereafter.

The first writings of Macaulay which had public issue were printed in *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*—among them were criticisms on Italian writers, a remarkable imaginary con-

versation between "Cowley and Milton," and the glittering, jingling battle verses about the War of the League and stout "Henry of Navarre"—full to the brim of that rush and martial splendor which he loved all his life, and which he brought in later years to his famous re-heralding of the *Lays of Ancient Rome.* A few lines are cited:—

"The King is come to marshal us, in all his armor drest;
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to wing
Down all our line a deafening shout, 'God save our Lord the King!'
And if my standard bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray;
Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre!"

On the year after this "Battle of Ivry" had sparkled into print appeared the paper on Milton, to which I have alluded, and which straightway set London doors open to the freshly fledged student-at-law. Crabb Robinson, in his diary of those days, speaks patronizingly of a "young gentleman of six or seven and twenty, who has emerged upon the dinner-giving public," and is astounding old habitués by his fulness and brilliancy of talk. He had not, to be sure, those lighter and sportive graces of conversation which floated shortly thereafter out from the open windows of Gore House, and had burgeoned under the beaming smiles of Lady Blessington. But he came to be a table match for Sydney Smith, and was honored by the invitations of Lady Holland,[1] who allowed no new find of so brilliant feather to escape her.

IN POLITICS AND VERSE

MACAULAY'S alliance with the Scottish Reviewers, and his known liberalism, make him a pet

[1] Greville (*Journal of Queen Victoria's Time*, vol. i., p. 369) speaks of a dinner at Lady Holland's—Macaulay being present—when her ladyship, growing tired of the eloquence of Speakers of the House of Commons and Fathers of the Church, said: "Well, Mr. Macaulay, can you tell us anything of dolls—when first named or

of the great Whigs; and through Lansdowne, with a helping hand from Melbourne, he found his way into Parliament: there were those who prophesied his failure in that field; I think Brougham in those days, with not a little of jealousy in his make up, was disposed to count him a mere essayist. But his speeches in favor of the Reform Bill belied all such auguries. Sir Robert Peel declared them to be wonderful in their grasp and eloquence; they certainly had great weight in furthering reform; and his Parliamentary work won presently for him the offer from Government of a place in India. No Oriental glamour allured him, but the new position was worth £10,000 per annum. He counted upon saving the half of this, and returning after five years with a moderate fortune. He did better, however—shortening his period of exile by nearly a twelvemonth, and bringing back £30,000.

His sister (who later became Lady Trevelyan) went with him as the mistress of his Calcutta household; and his affectionate and most tender relations with this, as well as with his younger sister, are beautifully set forth in the charming biography by his nephew, Otto Tre-

used?" Macaulay was ready on the instant—dilated upon Roman dolls and others—citing Persius, *"Veneri donato a virgine puppæ."*

velyan. It is a biography that everybody should read; and none can read it, I am sure, without coming to a kindlier estimate of its subject. The home-letters with which it abounds run over with affectionate playfulness. We are brought to no ugly *post mortem* in the book, and no opening of old sores. It is modest, courteous, discreet, and full.

Macaulay did monumental work in India upon the Penal Code. He also kept up there his voracious habits of reading and study. Listen for a moment to his story of this:

"During the last thirteen months I have read Eschylus, twice; Sophocles, twice; Euripides, once; Pindar, twice; Callimachus, Apollonius Rhodius, Theocritus, twice; Herodotus, Thucydides, almost all of Xenophon's works, almost all of Plato, Aristotle's *Politics*, and a good deal of his *Organon;* the whole of Plutarch's Lives; half of Lucian; two or three books of Athenæus; Plautus, twice; Terence, twice; Lucretius, twice; Catullus, Propertius, Lucan, Statius, Silius Italicus, Livy, Velleius Paterculus, Sallust, Cæsar, and lastly, Cicero."

This is his classical list. Of his modern reading he does not tell; yet he was plotting the *History of England,* and the bouncing balladry of the *Lays of Rome* was even then taking shape in the intervals of his study.

His father died while Macaulay was upon his voyage home from India—a father wholly unlike the son, in his rigidities and his Calvinistic asperities; but always venerated by him, and in the latter years of the old gentleman's life treated with a noble and beautiful generosity.

A short visit to Italy was made after the return from India; and it was in Rome itself that he put some of the last touches to the Lays—staying the work until he could confirm by personal observation the relative sites of the bridge across the Tiber and the home of Horatius upon the Palatine.

You remember the words perhaps; if not, 't were well you should,—

"Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
'Down with him!' cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
'Now yield thee,' cries Lars Porsena,
'Now yield thee to our grace!'

"Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Nought spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus nought spake he!

But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

"'Oh, Tiber, father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!'
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And, with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide."

This does not sound like those verses of Shelley, which we lately encountered. Those went through the empyrean of song like Aurora's chariot of the morning, with cherubs, and garlands, and flashing torches. This, in the comparison, is like some well-appointed dump-cart, with sleek, well-groomed Percheron horses—up to their work, and accomplishing what they are set to do absolutely well.

It was not until 1842, a year or two after the Italian visit, that Macaulay ventured to publish that solitary book of his verse; he very much doubted the wisdom of putting his literary reputation in peril by such overture in rhyme. It extorted, however, extravagant

praise from that muscular critic Christopher North; while the fastidious Hunt writes to him (begging a little money—as was his wont), and regretting that the book did not show more of the poetic aroma which breathes from the *Faerie Queene.* But say what we may of its lack—there is no weakly maundering; it is the work of a man full-grown, with all his wits active, and his vision clear, and who loved plain sirloins better than the fricandeaux and ragoûts of the artists.

There is also a scholarly handling, with high, historic air blowing through—as if he liked his Homer better than his Spenser; his prosody is up to the rules; the longs and shorts are split to a hair's breadth—jingling and merry where the sense calls for it; and sober and resonant where meaning is weighty; flashing, too, where need is—with sword play and spear-heads that glitter and waver over marching men; but nowhere—I think it must be said—the tremulous poetic *susurrus,* that falters, and touches, and detains by its mystic sounds—tempting one into dim border-lands where higher and more inspired singers find their way. Christabel is not of his school, nor the star-shaped shadow of Wordsworth's Daisy.

PARLIAMENTARIAN AND HISTORIAN

MEANTIME occasional papers from Macaulay's hand found their way into the pages of the great Northern *Review*—but by no means so many as the Whig managers could have wished; he had himself grown to think lightly of such work; the History was calling for his best powers, and there were parliamentary duties devolving upon him as member for Edinboro'.

I remember catching sight of him somewhere between 1844 and 1846—in his place in the House of Commons, and of listening to his brilliant castigation of Sir Robert Peel, in the matter, I think, of the Maynooth grant. He was well toward fifty then, but sturdy—with the firm tread of a man who could do his three or four leagues of walking—if need were; beetle-browed; his clothes ill-adjusted; his neck bundled in a big swathing of cravat. There was silence when he rose; there was nothing orator-like in his bearing; rather awkward in his pose; having scorn, too, as would seem, for any of the graces of elocution. But he was clear, emphatic, direct, with a great swift river of words all bearing toward definite aim.

Tory critics used to say he wrote his speeches and committed them to memory. There was no need for that. Words tripped to his tongue as easily as to his pen. But there were no delicate modulations of voice; no art of pantomime; no conscious or unconscious assumption of graceful attitudes; and when subject-matter enfevered and kindled him—as it did on that occasion—there was the hurry and the overstrained voice of extreme earnestness.

It was not very long after this that he met with a notable repulse from his old political supporters in Edinboro' that touched him grievously. But there were certain arts of the politician he could not, and would not, learn; he could not truckle; he could not hobnob with clients who made vulgar claims upon him. He could not make domiciliary visits, to kiss the babies—whether of patrons, or of editors; he could not listen to twaddle from visiting committees, without breaking into a righteous wrath that hurt his chances. Edinboro' afterward, however, cleared the record, by giving him before his death a triumphant return to Parliament.

Meantime that wonderful History had been written, and its roll of magniloquent periods made echo in every quarter of the literary

world. Its success was phenomenal. After the issue of its second couplet of volumes the publishers sent to the author a check for £20,000 on account. Such checks passing between publisher and author were then uncommon; and—without straining a point—I think I may say they are now. With its Macaulay endorsement, it makes a unique autograph, now in possession of the Messrs. Longmans—but destined to find place eventually among the manuscript treasures of the British Museum.

The great history is a partisan history, but it is the work of a bold and outspoken and manly partisan. The colors that he uses are intense and glaring; but they are blended in the making of his great panorama of King William's times, with a marvellous art. We are told that he was an advocate and not a philosopher; that he was a rhetorician and not a poet. We may grant all this, and we may grant more—and yet I think we shall continue to cherish his work. Men of greater critical acumen and nicer exploration may sap the grounds of some of his judgments; cooler writers, and those of more self-restraint, may draw the fires by which his indignations are kindled; but it will be very long before the world will cease to find high intellectual refreshment in the crackle of

his epigrams, in his artful deployment of testimony, in his picturesque array of great historic characters and in the roll of his sonorous periods.

Yet he is the wrong man to copy; his exaltations make an unsafe model. He exaggerates —but he knows how to exaggerate. He paints a truth in colors that flow all round the truth, and enlarge it. Such outreach of rhetoric wants corresponding capacity of brain, and pen-strokes that never swerve or tremble. Smallish men should beware how they copy methods which want fulness of power and the besom of enthusiasm to fill out their compass. Homer can make all his sea-waves iridescent and multitudinous—all his women high-bosomed or blue-eyed—and all his mountains sweep the skies; but *we* should be modest and simple.

It was not until Macaulay had done his last work upon the book (still incomplete) which he counted his monument, that he moved away from his bachelor quarters in the Albany (Piccadilly) and established himself at Holly Lodge, which, under the new name (he gave it) of Oirlie Lodge, may be found upon a winding lane in that labyrinth of city roads that lies between Kensington Gardens and Holland House. There was a bit of green lawn at-

tached, which he came to love in those last days of his; though he had been without strong rural proclivities. Like Gibbon, he never hunted, never fished, rarely rode. But now and then—among the thorn-trees reddening into bloom and the rhododendrons bursting their buds, the May mornings were "delicious" to him. He enjoyed, too, overmuch, the modest hospitalities he could show in a home of his own. There are joyfully turned notes—in his journal or in his familiar letters—of "a goose for Michaelmas," and of "a chine and oysters for Christmas eve," and "excellent audit ale" on Lord Mayor's day. There, too, at Holly Lodge, comes to him in August, 1857, when he was very sad about India (as all the world were), an offer of a peerage. He accepts it, as he had accepted all the good things of life—cheerily and squarely, and was thenceforward Baron Macaulay of Rothley. He appears from time to time on the benches of the Upper House, but never spoke there. His speaking days were over. A little unwonted fluttering of the heart warned him that the end was not far off.

A visit to the English lakes and to Scotland in 1859 did not—as was hoped—give him access of strength. He was much disturbed, too (at this crisis), by the prospect of a long sepa-

ration from his sister, Lady Trevelyan—whose husband had just now been appointed Governor of Madras. "This prolonged parting," he says, "this slow sipping of the vinegar and the gall is terrible!" And the parting came earlier than he thought, and easier; for on a day of December in the same year he died in his library chair. His nephew and biographer had left him in the morning—sitting with his head bent forward on his chest—an attitude not unusual for him —in a languid and drowsy reverie. In the evening, a little before seven, Lady Trevelyan was summoned, and the biographer says:— "As we drove up to the porch of my uncle's house, the maids ran crying into the darkness to meet us; and we knew that all was over."

He was not an old man—only fifty-nine. The stone which marks his grave in Westminster Abbey is very near to the statue of Addison.

In estimating our indebtedness to Macaulay as a historian—where his fame and execution were largest—we must remember that his method of close detail forbade wide outlook or grasp of long periods of time. If he had extended the same microscopic examination and dramatic exhibit of important personages to those succeeding reigns, which he originally

intended to cover—coming down to the days of William IV.—he would have required fifty volumes; and if he had attempted, in the same spirit, a reach like that of Green or Hume, his rhetorical periods must have overflowed more than two hundred bulky quartos! No ordinary man could read such; and—thank Heaven!—no extraordinary man could write so many.

SOME TORY CRITICS

AMONG those who sought with a delightsome pertinacity for flaws in the historic work of Macaulay, in his own time, was John Wilson Croker, to whom I have already alluded.[1] He was an older man than the historian; Irish by birth, handsome, well-allied by marriage, plausible, fawning on the great (who were of *his* party), wearing easily and boastfully his familiarity with Wellington, with Lansdowne and Cumberland, airing daintily his literary qualities at the tables of Holland or Peel; proud of his place in Parliament, where he loved to show a satiric grace of speech, and the curled lips of one used to more elegant encounters. In short, he was the very man to

[1] See p. 111, *Ante.*

light up the blazing contempt of such another as Macaulay; more than all since Croker was identified with the worst form of Toryism, and the other always his political antagonist. Such being the *animus* of the parties, one can imagine the delight of Croker in detecting a blunder of Macaulay, and the delight of Macaulay when he was able to pounce upon the blunders in Croker's edition of *Boswell's Johnson.* This was on many counts an excellent work and—with its emendations—holds its ground now; but I think the slaps, and the scourgings, and the derisive mockery which the critic dealt out to the self-poised and elegant Croker have made a highly appetizing *sauce piquante* for the book these many a year. For my own part, I never enjoy it half so much as when I think of Macaulay's rod of discipline "starting the dust out of the varlet's [editor's] jacket."

It is not a question if Croker deserved this excoriation; we are so taken up with the dexterity and effectiveness with which the critical professor uses the surgeon's knife, that we watch the operation, and the exceeding grace and ease with which he lays bare nerve after nerve, without once inquiring if the patient is really in need of such heroic treatment.

JOHN WILSON CROKER

The Croker Papers[1]—two ponderous volumes of letters and diary which have been published in these latter years—have good bits in them; but they are rare bits, to be dredged for out from quagmires of rubbish. The papers are interesting, furthermore, as showing how a cleverish man, with considerable gifts of presence and of brain, with his reactionary Toryism dominant, and made a fetich of, can still keep a good digestion and go in a respectable fashion through a long life—backwards, instead of "face to the front."

In this connection it is difficult to keep out of mind that other Toryish administrator of the *Quarterly* bombardments of reform and of Liberalists—I mean Lockhart (to whom reference has already been made in the present volume), and who, with all of Croker's personal gifts, added to these a still larger scorn than that of his elder associate in the Quarterly conclaves, for those whose social disabilities disqualified them for breathing the rarefied air which circulated about Albemarle Street and the courts of Mr. Murray. Even Mr. Lang in his apologetic but very interesting story of Lockhart's life,[2] cannot forbear

[1] *Memoirs and Correspondence,* 1885.
[2] Lang's *Lockhart,* p. 42, vol. ii.

quiet reprehensive allusions to that critic's odious way of making caustic allusion to "the social rank" of political opponents; although much of this he avers "is said in wrath." Yet it is an unworthy wrath, always and everywhere, which runs in those directions. Lockhart, though an acute critic, and a very clever translator, was a supreme worshipper of "conditions" rather than of qualities. He never forgave Americans for being Americans, and never pretermitted his wrathy exposition of their "low-lived antecedents" socially. The baronetcy of his father-in-law, Sir Walter Scott, was, I think, a perpetual and beneficent regalement to him.

TWO GONE-BY STORY-TELLERS

MUST it be said that the jolly story-teller of the sea and of the sea-ports, who wrote for our uncles and aunts, and elder brothers, the brisk, rollicking tales about *Midshipman Easy*, and *Japhet in Search of a Father,* is indeed gone by?

His name was Frederick Marryat,[1] the son

[1] Frederick Marryat, b. 1792; d. 1848; R. N., 1806; Commander, 1815; resigned, 1830. *Frank Mildmay,* 1829; *Midshipman Easy,* 1836; *Peter Simple,* 1837; *Jacob Faithful,* 1838; *Life,* by his daughter, Florence, 1872.

of a well-to-do London gentleman, who had served the little Borough of Sandwich as member of Parliament (and was also author of some verses and political tractates), but who did not wean his boy from an inborn love of the sea. To gratify this love the boy had sundry adventurous escapades; but when arrived at the mature age of fourteen, he entered as midshipman in the Royal Navy—his first service, and a very active one, being with that brave and belligerent Lord Cochrane, who later won renown on the west coast of South America. Adventures of most hazardous and romantic qualities were not wanting under such an officer, all of which were stored in the retentive memory of the enthusiastic and observant midshipman, and thereafter, for years succeeding, were strewn with a free hand over his tales of the sea. These break a good many of the rules of rhetoric—and so do sailors; they have to do with the breakage of nearly all the commandments—and so do sailors. But they are breezy; they are always pushing forward; spars and sails are all ship-shape; and so are the sailors' oaths, and the rattle of the chain-cables, and the slatting of the gaskets, and the smell of the stews from the cook's galley.

There is also a liberal and *quasi* democratic coloring of the links and interludes of his novels. The trials of *Peter Simple* grow largely out of the cruel action of the British laws of primogeniture; nor does the jolly midshipman—grandson, or nephew—forego his satiric raps at my lord "Privilege." Yet Marryat shows no special admiration for such evolutions of the democratic problem as he encounters in America.[1]

Upon the whole, one finds no large or fine literary quality in his books; but the *fun* in them is positive, and catching—as our aunts and uncles used to find it; but it is the fun of the tap-room, and of the fo'castle, rather than of the salon, or the library. For all this, scores and scores of excellent old people were shaking their sides—in the early part of this century—over the pages of Captain Marryat—in the days when other readers with sighs were bemoaning the loss of the "Great Magician's" power in the dreary story of *Count Robert of Paris,* or kindling into a new worship as they followed Ainsworth's[2] vivid narrative of Dick

[1] *Diary in America,* by Captain F. Marryat, 1839.

[2] William Harrison Ainsworth, b. 1805; d. 1882. *Rookwood,* 1834—chiefly notable for its wonderful description of Dick Turpin's ride—upon Black Bess—from London to York. *Tower of London,* 1840.

Turpin's daring gallop from London to York.

A nearer name to us, and one perhaps more familiar, is that of G. P. R. James,[1] an excellent, industrious man, who drove his trade of novel-making—as our engineers drive wells—with steam, and pistons, and borings, and everlasting clatter.

Yet,—is this sharp, irreverent mention, wholly fair to the old gentleman, upon whose confections, and pastries, so many of us have feasted in times past? What a delight it was—not only for youngsters, but for white-haired judges, and country lawyers—to listen for the jingle of the spurs, when one of Mr. James's swarthy knights—"with a grace induced by habits of martial exercise"—came dashing into old country quietudes, with his visor up; or, perhaps in "a Genoa bonnet of black velvet, round which his rich chestnut hair coiled in profusion"—making the welkin ring with his—"How now, Sir Villain!"

I caught sight of this great necromancer of

[1] G. P. R. James, b. 1801; d. 1860. *Richelieu* (first novel), 1829; *Darnley*, 1830; *One in a Thousand*, 1835; *Attila*, 1837. His books count far above a hundred in number: Lowndes (Bohn) gives over seventy titles of novels alone. What he might have done, with a modern typewriter at command, it is painful to imagine.

"miniver furs," and mantua-making chivalry —in youngish days, in the city of New York —where he was making a little over-ocean escape from the multitudinous work that flowed from him at home; a well-preserved man, of scarce fifty years, stout, erect, gray-haired and with countenance blooming with mild uses of mild English ale—kindly, unctuous—showing no signs of deep thoughtfulness or of harassing toil. I looked him over, in boyish way, for traces of the court splendors I had gazed upon, under his ministrations, but saw none; nor anything of the "manly beauty of features, rendered scarcely less by a deep scar upon the forehead,"—nor "of the gray cloth doublets slashed with purple;" a stanch, honest, amiable, well-dressed Englishman—that was all.

And yet, what delights he had conjured for us! Shall we be ashamed to name them, or to confess it all? Shall the modern show of new flowerets of fiction, and of lilies—forced to the front in January—make us forget utterly the old cinnamon roses, and the homely but fragrant pinks, which once regaled and delighted us, in the April and May of our age?

What incomparable siestas those were, when, from between half-closed eyelids, we

watched for the advent of the two horsemen—one in corselet of shining silver, inlaid with gold, and the other with hauberk of bright steel rings—slowly riding down the distant declivity, under the rays of a warm, red sunset! Then, there were abundance of gray castle-walls—ever so high, the ivy hanging deliciously about them; and there were clanging chains of draw-bridges, that rattled when a good knight galloped over; and there were stalwart gypsies lying under hedges, with charmingest of little ones with flaxen hair (who are not gypsies at all, but only stolen); and there is clash of arms; and there are bad men, who get punched with spear heads—which is good for them; and there are jolly old burghers who drink beer, and "troll songs"; and assassins who lurk in the shadows of long corridors—where the moonbeams shine upon their daggers; and there are dark-haired young women, who look out of casements and kiss their hands and wave white kerchiefs,—and somebody sees it in the convenient edge of the wood, and salutes in return, and steals away; and the assassin escapes, and the gypsies are captured in the bush, and some bad king is killed, and an old parchment is found, and the stars come out, and the rivulet

murmurs, and the good knight comes back; and the dark tresses are at the casement, and she smiles, and the marriage bells ring, and they are happy. And the school bell (for supper) rings, and we are happy!

As I close this book with these last shadowy glimpses of story-tellers, who have told their pleasant tales, and have lived out their time, and gone to rest, I see lifting over that fair British horizon, where Victoria shows her queenly presence—the modest Mr. Pickwick, with his gaiters and bland expanse of figure; Thackeray, too, with his stalwart form and spectacled eyes is peering out searchingly upon all he encounters; the refined face of Ruskin is also in evidence, and his easy magniloquence is covering one phase of British art with new robes. A woman's Dantesque profile shows the striking qualities which are fairly mated by the striking passages in *Adam Bede* and *Daniel Deronda;* one catches sight, too, of the shaggy, keen visage of the quarrel-loving Carlyle, and of those great twin-brethren of poesy —Browning and Tennyson—the Angelo and the Raphael of latter images in verse. Surely these make up a wonderful grouping of names —not unworthy of comparison with those

others whom we found many generations ago, grouped around another great queen of England, who blazed in her royal court, and flaunted her silken robes, and—is gone.

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